The Covenants and The Covenanters

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AND

THE COVENANTERS

COVENANTS, SERMONS, AND DOCUMENTS

OF

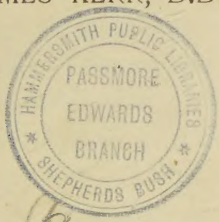
THE COVENANTED REFORMATION.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

INTRODUCTION ON THE NATIONAL COVENANTS

BY

REV. JAMES KERR, D.D., GLASGOW



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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE Covenants, Sermons, and Papers in this volume carry the readers back to some of the brightest periods of Scottish history. They mark important events in that great struggle by which these three kingdoms were emancipated from the despotisms of Pope, Prince, and Prelate, and an inheritance of liberty secured for these Islands of the Sea. The whole achievements of the heroes of the battlefields are comprehended under that phrase of Reformers and Martyrs, "The Covenanted Work of Reformation." The attainments of those stirring times were bound together by the Covenants, as by rings of gold.

The Sermons here were the product of the ripe thought of the main actors in the various scenes--men of piety, learning, and renown. Hence, the nature, objects, and benefits of personal and national Covenanting are exhibited in a manner fitted to attract to that ordinance the minds and hearts of men. The readers can well believe the statement of Livingstone, who was present at several ceremonies of covenant-renovation: "I never saw such motions from the Spirit of God. I have seen more than a thousand persons all at once lifting up their hands, and

the tears falling down from their eyes." In the presence of the defences of the Covenants as deeds, by these preachers, the baseless aspersions of novelists and theologues fade out into oblivion.

True Christians must, as they ponder these productions, be convinced that the Covenanters were men of intense faith and seraphic fervour, and their own hearts will burn as they catch the heavenly flame. Members of the Church of Christ will be stirred to nobler efforts for the Kingdom of their Lord as they meditate on the heroism of those who were the "chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof;" and they will behold with wonder that "to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent." And Statesmen will discover how Princes, Parliaments, and Peoples united in the hearty surrender of themselves to the Prince of the kings and kingdoms of the earth; and will be aroused to promote that policy of Christian Statesmanship which, illustrating the purpose and will of God, the Father, shall liberate Parliaments and nations from the bonds of false religions, and assert for them those liberties and honours which spring from the enthronement of the Son of Man, as King of kings and Lord of lords.

This volume of documents of olden times is sent out on a mission of Revival of Religion, personal and national, in the present times. It would do a noble work if it helped to humble classes and masses, and led them to return as one man to that God in covenant from

Whom all have gone so far away. A national movement, in penitence and faith, for the repeal of the Acts Rescissory and the recognition of the National Covenants would be as life from the dead throughout the British Empire. The people and rulers of these dominions shall yet behold the brilliancy of the Redeemer's crowns; and shall, by universal consent, exalt Him who rules in imperial majesty over the entire universe of God. For, "The seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ."

GLASGOW, *December, 1895.*

ERRATA.

Page 29, line 8, instead of "1745," *read* 1712.

Page 29, line 10, instead of "Crawfordjohn," *read* Auchensaugh, near Douglas.

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THE NATIONAL COVENANTS.

EVERY person who enters rightly into covenant with God is on the pathway to gladness and honour. He comes into sympathy with Him who from eternity made a covenant with His chosen. He gives joy to Him who loves to see His people even touch the hem of His garments, or eagerly grasp His Omnipotent hand. The Spirit of God on the heart of the believer draws him into the firmest attachment to the Beloved. Under His gracious influence, the bonds of prejudice against covenanting are as green withs and the covenanter stands forth in liberty and in power. So also, when the people of a kingdom together come into covenant with the Lord. In the character of Israel as a covenanted people, there shines out a special splendour. One of the most brilliant events in Judah's chequered history is that in which, in the days of the good king Asa, "they gathered themselves together to Jerusalem and entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; and all Judah rejoiced at the oath." More than any other nation of modern times, the people of the British Isles resemble in their covenant actings the people of Israel; and Scotland is the likest to Judah. Certainly, Scotland's covenants with God were coronets on Scotland's brow.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Scotland was a moral waste. The Papacy, which had attained the zenith

of its power on the Continent, reigned in its supremacy throughout the land. In Europe, indeed, there were some oases in the desolation, but here there were "stretched out upon the kingdom the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness." The chaos was as broad and deep as that of the Papal States before the time of Victor Emanuel. By the presence of the Papacy, mind, conscience, heart, were blasted; while ignorance, superstition, iniquity, increased and prevailed. But the Lord that saw the affliction of Israel in the land of the Pharaohs, was "the same yesterday"; and His time of visitation was one of love. The first signs of the coming deliverance were the martyr fires kindled to consume those who were beginning to cry for liberty. The heroic efforts and successes of the Reformers on the Continent, in the presence of Papal bulls and inquisitions, were a trumpet call to independence to the people of this priest-cursed land: and many responded right nobly, ready to stand amid the faggots at the stake rather than bear the iron heel that bruised them.

Those valiant men were led to bind themselves together in "bands," or covenants, and together to God, in prosecution of their aims. At Dun, in 1556, they entered into a "Band" in which they vowed to "refuse all society with idolatry." At Edinburgh, in 1557, they entered into "ane Godlie Band," vowing that "we, by His grace, shall, with all diligence, continually apply our whole power, substance, and our very lives to maintain, set forward and establish the most blessed Word of God." At Perth, in 1559, they entered into covenant "to put away all things that dishonour His name, that God may be truly and purely worshipped." At Edinburgh, in 1560, they entered into covenant "to procure, by all means possible, that the truth of God's Word may have free passage within this realm." And these covenants were soon followed by the Confession of Faith prepared by Knox and five other Reformers, and acknowledged by the three

Estates as "wholesome and sound doctrine grounded upon the infallible truth of God;" by an Act abolishing the "jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome within this realme," and forbidding "title or right by the said hishop of Rome or his sect to anything within this realme," and by the first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Seven years thereafter, 1569, the Parliament recognised, by specific Act, the reformed Church of Scotland as "the only true and holy kirk of Jesus Christ within this realm." The young Church of Scotland was based on the Word of God, anti-papal, free, reformed, and covenanting, and in that character acknowledged by the State. "At this time," writes D'Aubigne, "the reformed church was recognised and established by the State—a triumph similar to that of Christianity when under Constantine the religion of the Crucified One ascended the throne of the Cæsars." In spite of the vacillating policy of the King and Parliament, and their repeated attempts to impose the order of bishops on the Church, the reformation proceeded steadily, and a great advance was reached by the National Covenant of 1580.

This National Covenant, or Second Confession of Faith, was prepared by John Craig, minister of Holyrood House. Its original title was "Ane Short and Generall Confession of the True Christiane Faith and Religione, according to God's verde and Actis of our Perlamentis, subscryved by the Kingis Majestie and his Household, with sindrie otheris, to the glorie of God and good example of all men, att Edinburghe, the 28 day of Januare, 1580, and 14 yeare of his Majestie's reigne." The immediate occasion of this memorable transaction was the discovery of a secret dispensation from the Pope consenting to the profession of the reformed religion by Roman Catholics, but instructing them to use all their influence in promotion of the "ancient faith." Though the King was still in sympathy to some degree with the policy of Rome against the "new faith," he

could not dare to resist the indignation of the people against Romish intrigues, and their demand for a national bond as a means of defence. By the National Covenant, the Covenanters declared their belief "in the true Christian faith and religion, revealed by the blessed evangel, and received by the Kirk of Scotland, as God's eternal truth and only ground of our Salvation;" renounced "all kinds of Papistry," its authority, dogmas, rites and decrees, and pledged themselves to maintain "the King's majesty, in the defence of Christ, against all enemies within this realm or without." It was signed by the King and the Privy Council and throughout the kingdom, and was subscribed again in 1590 and 1596. "The Kirk of Scotland," wrote Calderwood, "was now come to her perfection and the greatest puritie that ever she attained unto, both in doctrine and discipline, so that her beautie was admirable to forraine kirks. The assemblies of the sancts were never so glorious." This period was the meridian of the first Reformation.

But the time of Scotland's rest and joy was short indeed. Ere the sixteenth century opened, the ecclesiastical edifice, raised by Knox, the Melvilles and other reformers, was almost in ruins. The monarch had been taught in his youth the doctrine of the divine right of kings, and he was now determined to assert it. Both church and state must be laid in the dust before his absolute will. Both had been delivered from a popedom on the banks of the Tiber, now they will be contronted by a popedom on the banks of the Thames; and the despotism of the Pope shall be even exceeded by the despotism of the Prince. Scotland is now to be the scene of a struggle with issues more momentous than any ever waged on any field of battle. Shall civil and religious liberty be saved from captivity by tyrants on the throne? Shall free assemblies and free parliaments be extinguished in the land that has, by its people and its Parliament, abolished the authority of Rome

and taken its National Covenant with God? For nearly a hundred years this conflict was destined to continue till, at the Revolution Settlement, the divine right of kings was banished the realm.

Kingcraft forthwith commenced its work of demolition and proceeded to deliver its blows in rapid succession. Summoning to its aid Laud and other sycophantic counsellors, it subtly resolved to lay its hand on the very conscience of the church. Mitres were offered some of her more prominent ministers, for Charles I. knew that Presbyterianism is the friend of civil freedom, and that Prelacy in the Church will more readily consent to despotism in the State. The "Black Acts" were passed confirming the "king's royal power over all states and subjects within this realm," discharging all assemblies held "without our Sovereign Lord's special licence and commandment," and requiring ministers to acknowledge the ecclesiastical superiority of bishops. The assembly was induced to adopt a proposal for the appointment of a number of commissioners to sit and vote in Parliament, become members of the Privy Council, and Lords of Session; and such honours would not readily be declined. Then came the Court of High Commission, instituted for the purpose of compelling the "faithful" ministers to acknowledge the bishops appointed by the king—a court called into existence by royal proclamation, "a sort of English Inquisition," writes Dr. M'Crie, "composed of prelates, noblemen, knights, and ministers, and possessing the combined power of a civil and ecclesiastical tribunal." After this came the Act giving full legal status to the "Anti-Christian hierarchy" of Episcopacy in Scotland; the formal consecration of the first Scottish prelates; the five articles of Perth; the Canons and Constitutions Ecclesiastical—a complete code of laws for the Church issued without any consultation with the representatives of the Church; an Act charging all His Majesty's subjects to

conform to the order of worship prescribed by him, and the Semi-Popish Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments which was imposed upon all parishes and ministers. By these and other measures, the sovereign impiously assumed that spiritual power which belonged to Christ alone, as King and Head of the Church. Here, in its worst form, was "the absolutism that had so long threatened the extinction of their liberties; here was the heel of despotism openly planted on the neck of their Church, and the crown openly torn from the brow of Christ, her only King."

During all these years, the Reformers were resisting with courage the assaults of the enemy. At times there were secessions from their ranks when, under the bribes and threats of prince and prelate, some ingloriously succumbed. But, as Renwick said later in the struggle, "the loss of the men was not the loss of the cause." The champions of the Reformation, led by Andrew Melville, feared not to arraign that monarch who once told his bishops that "now he had put the sword into their hands they should not let it rust." They tabled petitions, published protests, obtained interviews, but all proved powerless to arrest the career of those who were bent on the annihilation of the Church, and the establishment on its ruins of the royal Supremacy. In one of their protests, they call upon the Estates to "advance the building of the house of God, remembering always that there is no absolute and undoubted authority in the world excepting the sovereign authority of Christ the King, to whom it belongeth as properly to rule the Kirk according to the good pleasure of His own will, as it belongeth to Him to save the Kirk by the merit of His own sufferings." The attempt to impose Laud's liturgy gave opportunity for an outburst of the slumbering flame of discontent. Janet Geddes flung a stool at the head of the officiating Dean, and the tumult that ensued extended far

and wide. A tablet, recently erected to her memory in St. Giles, states that "she struck the first blow in the great struggle for freedom of conscience." The proclamation by the Council of the State, condemning all meetings against the Episcopal Canons and Service Book, brought the Reformers accessions from all parts of the kingdom. Could an oppressed people bear the tyranny longer? But, will they take up arms and scatter carnage and blood throughout the land? No, their weapons will not be carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. They will go to the Covenant God of the kingdom, and they will stand before Him, saying, "Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse." Scotland will renew her covenant with God.

The National Covenant of 1580 was produced. An addition was made, in two parts. The part summarizing the Acts of Parliament, condemning the papacy and ratifying the confessions of the Church, was drafted by Warriston; that with special religious articles for the time was by Henderson. The spot chosen for the solemnities of the first subscription was the Churchyard of Greyfriars, Edinburgh. "The selection," writes the historiographer-royal for Scotland, "showed a sound taste for the picturesque. The graveyard in which their ancestors have been laid from time immemorial stirs the hearts of men. The old Gothic Church of the Friary was then existing; and landscape art in Edinburgh has by repeated efforts established the opinion that from that spot we have the grandest view of the precipices of the Castle and the national fortress crowning them. It seemed a homage to that elevating influence of grand external conditions which the actors in the scene were so vehemently repudiating." In that memorable spot the Reformers gathered "the legitimate charters" of their nation into one document and presented them before heaven. Johnston unrolled the parchment in which these Scottish

charters were inscribed, and read them in a clear, calm voice. "When he had finished, all was still as the grave. But the silence was soon broken. An aged man of noble air was seen advancing. He came forward slowly, and deep emotion was visible in his venerable features. He took up the pen with a trembling hand and signed the document. A general movement now took place. All the Presbyterians in the Church pressed forward to the Covenant and subscribed their names. But this was not enough; a whole nation was waiting. The immense parchment was carried into the churchyard and spread out on a large tombstone to receive on this expressive table the signature of the Church. Scotland had never beheld a day like that." "This," says Henderson, "was the day of the Lord's power, in which multitudes offered themselves most willingly, like dewdrops of the morning. This was, indeed, the great day of Israel, wherein the arm of the Lord was revealed—the day of the Redeemer's strength, on which the princes of the people assembled to swear their allegiance to the King of kings." Charles I. understood well the force of that mighty movement when, on hearing of it, he said, "I have no more power in Scotland than a Doge of Venice." The renewal of that covenant, 28th February, 1638, was a thunderbolt against despotism in Scotland, and the world over. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand."

The covenant was transcribed into hundreds of copies, carried throughout the country from north to south and east to west, and subscribed everywhere. The spirit that thrilled the thousands filling and overflowing Greyfriars Church and churchyard, spread with rapidity over the whole land. It combined the "whole nation into one mighty phalanx of incalculable energy." The last sparks of the King's fury burst out in secret instructions to his followers to use all power against the "refractory and seditious," and in a threat to

send his army and fleet to Scotland, but these soon died away. The "refractory and seditious" king eventually surrendered to the Covenanters, abolished courts, canons, liturgies, and articles, and consented to the calling of a General Assembly. This was the first free General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for the last forty two years. It was held in Glasgow, on 21st November, 1638; and its work in the overthrow of Prelacy and the royal supremacy and in the re-assertion of the spiritual independence of the Church, was one of the most signal successes in the still progressing conflict of the second Reformation.

Meanwhile, Charles II. was endeavouring to secure the recognition of his absolute monarchy in England. There also he rigorously demanded submission to despotic claims. By abolishing Parliaments, annulling charters, appointing the star chamber, he introduced a reign of terror. In the room of those legislative bulwarks of liberty, which the nation had constructed through the skill and experience of generations, a "grim tyranny," writes Dr. Wylie, "reared its gaunt form, with the terrible accompaniments of star chamber, pillory, and branding irons. It reminded one of sunset in the tropics. There the luminary of the day goes down at a plunge into the dark. So had the day of liberty in England gone down at a stride into the night of tyranny." The oppressed people turned to the Covenanters of Scotland for sympathy and counsel. The negotiations resulted in the preparation of an international league in defence of religion and liberty. Against the banner of the King they raised the banner of the Covenant. Alexander Henderson drafted the new Bond. The document breathed the spirit of the National Covenant of Greyfriars, condemned the Papal and Prelatic system pled for a constitutional monarchy, and outlined a comprehensive programme for future efforts in extending the principles of the Reformation. On September 25, 1643, it was subscribed in St. Margarets

Church, Westminster. The members of Parliament in England and the Westminster Assembly of Divines stood with uplifted hands, and, as article after article was read, they took this Oath to God. The Commissioners from Scotland to the Westminster Assembly united with the people of England in the solemnity of the day. Thus the representatives of the two nations stood before the Lord. This was the Solemn League and Covenant, "the noblest in its essential features," writes Hetherington, "of all that are recorded among the international transactions of the world." The Parliament and Westminster Assembly issued instructions for its subscription throughout the kingdom. The classes and the masses in England, Scotland, and Ireland received it with gladness. In the face of a despotism unexampled in the history of these lands, high and low, rich and poor, bowed themselves as one before the throne of God. "For at that time day by day there came to David to help him, until it was a great host like the host of God." Through this League and Covenant, the people of the British Isles were protected by Omnipotence, and were as invincible against the despotic forces that assailed them as were the white cliffs of their native shores against the huge galleons of the invincible Armada.

"To Thine own people, with Thine arm,
Thou didst redemption bring;
To Jacob's sons and to the tribes
Of Joseph that do spring."

These Covenants were prepared and subscribed in a spirit of deep piety. But for the sterling spirituality of the Reformers there would never have been a Covenanted Reformation. The work of Covenanting is itself a lofty spiritual exercise, and requires a people possessing much of the Spirit of the living God. Every public act for the sake of Christ should be the outcome of an impassioned devotion. The reading of even the scant records of those times of

Covenanting, telling of the prayers, and tears, and love, and courage of those who gave themselves to God, is fitted to inspire the coldest heart with noblest emotions. Their inward piety made them men of power, and enabled them to bear down every barrier to the kingdom of their Lord erected by the craft of prince and priest. It is when Israel would call her Lord, Ishi, my Husband, that "the names of Baalim would be taken out of her mouth and be remembered no more." It was when the Christians of the Mearns had communion at "the table of the Lord Jesus," ministered by Knox, that they "banded themselves to the uttermost of their power to maintain the true preaching of the Evangel of Christ." The historian, Burton, describes the movement that resulted in the subscription of the National Covenant as the fruit of "a great religious revival," and the Reformation as "the great revival." And Kirkton says, "I verily believe there were more souls converted to Christ in that short time than in any other season since the Reformation." Their intense piety prepared the Covenanters for the persecutions to follow and for crowns of martyrdom. In and around their whole Covenanting procedure, there was the atmosphere of a paradise of communion with God.

These Covenants exhibited the great ecclesiastical breadth of the Covenanters. The enthronement of the Word of God over the Church was one of the commanding objects of the Reformers. If only the Church would hear and honour Christ, her King, speaking in that Word, then would she be clothed with the sun, and have on her head a crown of twelve stars. The Reformers resolutely set themselves to apply the Word to the Church, in all her departments; she must be such an institution as her Lord had instructed. The will of priest, and prince, and presbyter, and people, must be set aside in the presence of the will of her sole Sovereign. The works of demolition and reconstruction must go on together. Built according to the design of

her Lord, her bulwarks, and towers, and palaces shall command the admiration of the world. The pattern was not taken from Rome, nor "even from Geneva, but from the blessed Word of God." No quarter shall be given to hierarchy of Pope or prelate in the government of the Church, to the "commandments of men" in the doctrine of the Church, or to unscriptural rites in the worship of the Church. So great was their success that the Reformers could say that they "had borrowed nothing from the border of Rome," and had "nothing that ever flowed from the man of sin." Often the battle raged most fiercely round the standard of the independence of the Church, but ever the Covenanters emerged from the struggle victorious. Valorously did they maintain that Christ ought to "bear the glory of ruling His own kingdom, the Church," and fearlessly they defied the monarchs in their invasions of Messiah's rights. Besides, they were not satisfied with the attainment of a united Church in their own kingdom alone. They were filled with the spirit of the Saviour's prayer, "That they all may be one." In the present times, those who publicly contend for the reunion of a "few scattered fragments" of the Reformed Church are belauded as men of large hearts and liberal aims. The Covenanters embodied in their Solemn League and Covenant an engagement to "bring the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity;" and they also subsequently included the Churches on the Continent in their efforts for ecclesiastical union. For the purposes of these ecclesiastical unions, the Westminster Assembly sat for five years in Westminster, after signing the Solemn League, and framed a basis for union in the standards they produced—which still testify that the members of that Assembly were in advance of their times. Yes, the Covenanters were not narrow, sectarian, bigoted; but large, liberal, Catholic.

These Covenants were deeds of lofty imperial significance. The reformation of the Church, however complete, would have been a limited Reformation. There are two powers ordained of God and both must be reformed. The comprehensive aims of the Covenanters embraced both State and Church. Their deeds were civil as well as ecclesiastical. A Church thoroughly reformed and Christian in a State unreformed and anti-Christian, would never have satisfied the Reformers. The State also must be no longer a vassal of the Pope, it must be a servant of the blessed and only Potentate. God in His word here also as in the Church must be joyfully granted the exclusive supremacy. The Covenanters vowed to defend the King in the defence and preservation of the reformed religion. They secured the recognition of the Church by Parliament. The members of Parliament themselves became Covenanters. In short, Christianity pervaded and adorned the constitution and administration of civil government in the United Kingdom. The Covenanters were convinced that no power, except that provided by the Word of God, could possibly resist the arbitrary claims of the monarchs, secure the safety of the State, and promote civil liberty in the land. Religion in the realm of citizenship is the very crown of any realm. In the face of the despotisms of Pope and Monarch, it would not have been surprising had the Covenanters invented and endeavoured to apply to the State the modern theory of religious equality, which denies the right of the State to even acknowledge the Prince of the kings of the earth. If ever they dreamt of such a theory, their thought of the supremacy of Jesus would make it vanish as a dream. Much less would they ever admit the possibility of deliverance by the theory of a concurrent recognition of all religions, as this would lower a nation to the position of heathenism with its "gods many," and would soon involve the strongest empire in disaster. Papalism in

the State in the ascendancy, absolute Monarchism in the State, Secularism in the State, Polytheism in the State—these are four despotisms, and must be flung with detestation out of all Christian lands. The State that is not on the side of Christ, and Christ alone, is in antagonism to all the moral forces of the universe. Its throne is against the throne of the Highest. The Scottish Covenanters placed the crown of the State on the Head of its rightful Monarch, and so lifted their kingdom to imperial grandeur.

There are some spots of this world that have secured undying memorials, as they have been stages for the settlement of questions of momentous importance in the destinies of nations. There is Marathon in Greece, Waterloo in France, Sadowa in Austria, and Trafalgar on the sea, but probably the scenes associated with these pale in glory in the presence of Greyfriars and Westminster, where nations won unparalleled victories in the surrender of themselves to their Covenant God. These two spots were the earthly centres of spiritual movements of mighty magnitude, and possess in the eyes of the God of Heaven and of the principalities about His Throne a splendour not eclipsed by any that ever shone on a battlefield. When the day of millennial glory comes, the people of the new Era will not look to the Sadowas and the Sedans, but to such spots as these where the greatest heroes of the pre-millennial times reflected millennial light and anticipated millennial triumphs. For there, by an army without sword or spear, the absolutism of Monarchies and the tyranny of Hierarchies were scattered like chaff before the wind. As the Covenanters entered into and rejoiced in their vows to God, the Imperialism of King Jesus conquered the Imperialism which prince and priest had been enforcing with rigour; and this Imperialism shall be in the ascendancy yet the world over when the empires of earth shall crown the Christ of God as King of the Church and King of nations.

But the Covenanters have scarce time to estimate and enjoy the benefits of their conquests before a tempest burst forth suddenly and threatened the destruction of all the attainments of the past. In a moment of national infatuation the Stuart dynasty was restored to the throne, and Charles II. instantly proceeded to set up once more the Dagon of the Royal Supremacy and enforce its recognition by all his power. On two occasions he had subscribed the Solemn League, and he had issued instructions in its favour, professing warm admiration of both Covenants and of the Reformation. But now the perjured monarch employed all his craft and power to overthrow the whole Covenanted Reformation in Church and State. Parliament, the slave of his behests, passed the Act of Supremacy, giving legislative sanction to all the rights he claimed. The Acts Rescissory followed, declaring the Covenants unlawful and seditious deeds, and repealing all Parliamentary laws in their favour. Then came the abolition of Presbyterianism, Indulgences, the restoration of Prelacy, the appointment of High Commission Courts, the ejection of all ministers who would not obey the royal mandates, and the erection of scaffolds. The monarch seemed determined to extinguish every spark of liberty in the kingdom. The reign of peace was supplanted by a reign of terror. The Covenants were broken, burnt, buried, by public orders. The Covenanters met to worship God in the moorlands and dells, setting a watch for the dragoons of Claverhouse. Thousands upon thousands of the noblest patriots were imprisoned, tortured, mangled, shot. At times their indignation burst forth through arms, as at Rullion Green, Drumclog, and Bothwell Bridge. Their most brilliant victories were on the scaffold when they passed triumphantly to the crown ; for there was "a noble army" of martyrs, from Argyle the proto-martyr of the "Killing times," down to the youthful Renwick, last of the white-robed throng. The ruin wrought by Charles I. in England "we

have likened," says Dr. Wylie, "to a tropical sunset, where night follows day at a single stride. But the fall of Scotland into the abyss of oppression and suffering under Charles II. was like the disastrous eclipse of the sun in his meridian height, bringing dismal night over the shuddering earth at the hour of noon."

"The hills with the deep mournful music were ringing,
The curlew and plover in concert were singing;
But the melody died 'midst derision and laughter,
As the hosts of ungodly rushed on to the slaughter.

"When the righteous had fallen and the combat had ended,
A chariot of fire through the dark cloud descended;
The drivers were angels on horses of whiteness,
And its burning wheels turned on axles of brightness.

"On the arch of the rainbow the chariot is gliding;
Through the paths of the thunder the horsemen are riding;
Glide swiftly, bright spirits, the prize is before you,
A crown never fading, a kingdom of glory."

Throughout the long thirty years of persecution, the decimated Covenanters still lived. The Banner for Christ's Crown and Covenant was still waved by them through the blood-stained land. Oftentimes they issued declarations and protests against the tyranny of their oppressors, many of which concluded with those inspiriting words at the close of the last of them, "Let King Jesus reign and all His enemies be scattered." The most famous of these papers was the Sanquhar Declaration. On the 22nd of June, 1680, twenty horsemen rode into the burgh of Sanquhar, and at the market cross read their declaration, in which they "disowned Charles Stuart that has been reigning (or rather tyrannizing as we may say) on the throne of Britain these years bygone, as having any right, title to, or interest in the said Crown of Scotland for government, as forfeited several years since by his perjury and breach of Covenant both to God and His Kirk, and usurpation of His Crown and Royal Prerogatives therein." That courageous act of

those twenty patriots proclaimed the doom of the House of Stuart.

> "Men called it rash, perhaps it was crime:
> Their deed flashed out God's will, an hour before the time."

A few years afterwards, the nations of England and Scotland endorsed the action of Richard Cameron and his compatriots. The blood of Guthrie, and Cargill, and MacKail had cried for vengeance, and the God of the Covenanters hurled the Stuart dynasty from the throne. "Alas! is it not true?" writes Carlyle in his *Heroes*, "that many men in the van do always, like Russian soldiers, march into the ditch of Schwiednitz, and fill it up with their dead bodies, that the rear may pass over them dry-shod, and gain the honour? How many earnest, rugged Cromwells, Knoxes, poor peasant Covenanters, wrestling, battling for very life, in rough, miry places, have to struggle and suffer and fall, greatly censured, bemired, before a beautiful Revolution of eighty-eight can step over them in official pumps and silk stockings, with universal three-times-three!"

The stedfast followers of the Covenanters expected that, on the cessation of the persecution, there would be the restoration of the whole Covenanted Reformation in Church and State. But their just expectations were doomed to bitter disappointment. Neither by Church nor State was any proposal ever seriously entertained of renewing the national Covenants with God, as at the commencement of the Second Reformation. Instead, the Acts Rescissory were permitted to remain on the Statute-book, and the Covenants to lie under the infamy to which the King and the Royalists had consigned them. The State exerted an Erastian control of the Church, and the Church yielded submission. Her standards were assigned her before she met; her assemblies were summoned and prorogued at the sovereign's pleasure; Presbyterianism was established,

not because it possessed a *jus divinum* but because the people willed it; her government was controlled through the admission into her ministry, by royal request, of many who had accepted indulgences and were supporters of Prelacy. The whole period of the Second Reformation was almost annihilated by the settlement of the Church, not according to the periods, 1638 and 1643, but according to 1592. The Acts of the Assemblies of the Revolution Church never once mention the Solemn League and Covenant. Ministers who pled for its recognition exposed themselves to the censures of their brethren. An attempt by the Church, soon after the Revolution to assert the supremacy of Christ and the Church's independence under Him, issued in the dissolution of the Assembly by the royal Commissioner. And this departure of the Church and State at the Revolution was strikingly and sadly endorsed when, at the Union with England, Scotland consented that the Prelatic Establishment in England should be allowed to remain "inviolable for ever." A few "stones had been gathered from the wreck of the Reformation to be incorporated with the new structure, but the venerable fabric itself was left in ruins."

Yes! the Revolution came but not the Reformation. The sword was returned to its scabbard, but Church and State did not return to their Covenant God. Into sympathy and fellowship with institutions founded on principles subversive of those they had vowed to maintain, the faithful followers of the Reformers and Martyrs could not enter. The banner for Christ's Crown and Covenant had waved over the fields of Scotland when the storms of persecution had raged most fiercely, and how could they be justified in dropping it now when the God of Zion was pleased to command a calm. The minority who thus preserved an unbroken relationship with the pre-Revolution and Martyr period continued to meet in "Societies" for

sixteen years, when they were joined by a minister—Rev. John M'Millan—who was driven out of the Revolution Church because of his testimony for the whole Covenanted Reformation. Some years afterwards, another minister espoused the cause then represented by Mr. M'Millan and the United Societies, and this union resulted in the constitution of the Reformed Presbytery. Two years afterwards, in 1745, the members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church engaged in the work of Covenant Renovation, at Crawfordjohn, in Lanarkshire. Since that time this Church has had an unbroken history, excepting a disruption in 1863, when a majority departed from her distinctive position.

But what is the bearing of Scotland's Covenanted Reformation of three centuries ago, on the Scotland of the present times? Has it no instruction for all times? Is the whole prolonged struggle, with all its chequered scenes, but a panorama on which spectators may gaze with but passing emotions? Is it all but a story with interest, however thrilling, for the study of the antiquarian? If so then the whole contendings of Reformers and Covenanters and Martyrs sink into insignificance indeed; they have been assigned a magnitude far beyond their desert. If the doctrines and principles for whose application in Church and State they fought and suffered, were unscriptural, then let an enlightened posterity bury with shame the story of their warfare. Or, if they were of mere temporary importance, then the Covenanters merit no higher admiration than that accorded to those who, like the Armenians now in Turkey, cry out against the oppressions of the civil power. But these doctrines and principles were brought from the Word of God and possess imperishable excellency. Their glory was not temporal; it is eternal. And they shall yet undergo a resurrection and receive universally a joyous recognition.

The obligation of these national Covenants on the

British nation still has been oftentimes demonstrated by indisputable arguments. The Word of God teaches in the most pointed manner this principle of devolving Covenant obligation. The God of Israel threatened His people with chastisement for breaking the Covenant He had made with their fathers four hundred years before. The Covenanters themselves bound their posterity to God by express words in their bonds. The renovation of Covenants at various times proceeded on this principle. In the time of persecution, the sufferers again and again declared that they and others were bound by the vows of their fathers. "God hath laid engagements upon Scotland," said Argyle on the scaffold, "we are tied by Covenants to religion and Reformation; and it passeth the power of all the magistrates under heaven to absolve from the oath of God." The scriptural character of their contents infers the perpetual obligation of these Covenants. All who accept the Scriptures as the Word of God, must renounce the errors condemned by the Covenants and contend for the truths those who subscribed them pledged themselves to maintain. No Christian should ever dare to seek relief from the claims of Christ; it is his honour to acknowledge and live and die for them. These deeds were as national as any in the statute-book and therefore they are obligatory still, for the nation in its corporate character is the same now as three hundred years ago. Their perpetual obligation may be resisted, as it often is, on the plea that a people have no right to bind posterity. But should such a plea be declared valid, then society would be thrown into the wildest disorder and temporal ruin would overtake millions. Heirs could be justified in refusing to fulfil the instructions of testators; young people could condemn the baptismal vows taken by parents; governments and cabinets could tear up the treaties of their predecessors; and the nation itself could repudiate the national debt. Those who enter into the

possession of valuable estates, secured for them by the toil and struggles of ancestry, do not renounce their estates because they themselves were not consulted in the execution of the title deeds. These deeds of the Covenanters, and the heritage secured by them, were obtained through the noblest sacrifices. They were deeds presented before the Throne, and registered in the Court of heaven, and those who repudiate them incur the risk of an awful forfeiture.

The present conditions in Church and State throughout the British Isles, force upon the minds of all who admire the Reformation the facts that the doctrines and principles of those Reformations are even now ignored and despised, and that the systems which were cast out by the whole nation through their Covenants are now in power. The objects sought by the Covenants have not yet been realized. In several sad respects, both Church and State are in positions of acute antagonism to those great catholic objects. An ecclesiastical supremacy in the British sovereign rears its head over these Covenanted kingdoms; for, as Blackstone writes, this supremacy is "an inherent right of the British Crown." The "Anti-Christian" hierarchy of Prelacy is implanted in the national constitution and sustained by the whole prestige of the realm. Under its lordly bewitchery, Erastianism prevails in the Established Churches of the kingdom. The Oath of Allegiance implicates all who take it in an acknowledgment of the ecclesiastical supremacy of the sovereign as "by law established," and this Oath must be taken by every member of Parliament before he can sit and vote in the House, under a penalty of five hundred pounds. The basis of qualification for membership in Parliament has been so much altered in recent times that Roman Catholics, atheists, and now idolaters are admitted — changes which have been demanded by the vast majority of the non-established Churches, who are pleading for the exclusion

of religion from all State institutions. The Papacy, through its various agencies, is in receipt of more than a million and a quarter pounds annually from the national funds. A wide-spread reaction in favour of the Romish religion is going forward, and is being powerfully assisted by the Romanizing movement in the Church of England, and the Ritualistic in the Presbyterian Churches throughout the kingdom.

Had the two nations and their Churches adhered to their National Covenants and the Solemn League and Covenant, and to the formularies prepared by the international Assembly at Westminster, the lovers of the Covenanted Reformation would not have had these portentous conditions to deplore to-day. Would their adherence to those deeds and documents have done them any dishonour? And would it not be to the lasting honour of their posterity now, if a movement were originated and carried through to reproduce with all possible fulness the scenes of the past—another Greyfriars, Edinburgh, and another St. Margarets, Westminster. But, even apart from the historical aspect of the whole matter, the question may, in the presence of these monstrous evils, be pressed upon the attention and heart of all the people throughout the land? What ought to be done to remove these evils and avert the disaster which their continuance must entail? What ought the British subject, if a patriot, do, in the face of evils which threaten the ruin of his kingdom? What ought the Protestant to do, in the presence of a government and administration which are daily advancing the court of Rome to power? What the Presbyterian, who cannot take the Oath of Allegiance without committing himself to the hierarchy of Prelacy? What the Christian, in the presence of systems in imperial politics which have already dethroned Christ and are hastening to expel Him from all national institutions? Is there no

means by which the Christian citizen can exonerate himself from national sins, and free himself of all responsibility for national calamity? Must he still exercise his right to vote and give his support to governments which, in the hands of both political parties, are augmenting rather than diminishing the existing evils? If the members of one political party secede from that party, when changes they cannot accept are welcomed to their programme, and henceforth refuse them their support at the polling-booth, would it not be proper that men, sensible of the utter inadequacy of the performances of both parties to meet the evils under which the nation lies, should stand aloof from both government and opposition? The leading Unionists in Ireland again and again declared that they could not possibly enter into the proposed Parliament under Home Rule which would be set up in Dublin, and their declarations awakened universal sympathy. For reasons similar, should not all Christian electors refuse to identify themselves with a constitution and government which are based on principles subversive of independence and liberty? Protests against existing evils are not sufficient. Practical political dissent is imperatively demanded in the interests of patriotism and Christianity. If even one-tenth of the electors in the United Kingdom prepared a paper of grievances, setting forth the present dishonours done to Christ nationally, and calling for the abandonment of all that is unscriptural in the public policy, and the adoption of what is scriptural and honouring to Christ, and accompany this manifesto with a declaration that they cannot violate their convictions by identifying themselves with the government till reforms be conceded, would not such a movement touch the mind and heart of the nation as no question in party politics has done for generations? Their attitude of separation would carry extraordinary dignity and power. And they could plead too that the evils of which they complained

were abjured by the nation universally, when the National Covenants were taken in Scotland, England, and Ireland, and when Sovereigns and Members of Parliament again subscribed them as a condition of the high offices to which they were called. How could they loyally support a Constitution now so opposite to the ancient Scriptural and Covenanted Constitution of the realm? The Reformed Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and Ireland are the only Churches within the British Dominions that take this position of political dissent. Their fathers took it at the Revolution settlement, and they have maintained it all through these centuries till now; and they have done so not because they love the nation less, but Christ more. If this position were assumed by larger numbers throughout the land, who knoweth whether they would "not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" "Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with Thee, that frameth mischief by a law?" "Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

"Hope thou not, then, earth's alliance,
Take thy stand behind the cross;
Fear, lest by unblest compliance,
Thou transmute thy gold to dross.
Stedfast in thy meek endurance,
Prophesy in sackcloth on;
Hast thou not the pledged assurance,
Kings one day shall kiss the Son."

The popular acceptance of these doctrines and principles by the State and the Churches at present, would imply a vast mental upheaval—a vast moral revolution. But the best hopes and wishes for the nation at large are that it will come and come soon, and the present evils, however great, must not be allowed to produce a pessimistic tone. Very hopeless seemed the prospects before the first Reformation, but that Reformation came. Very hopeless seemed the

prospects before the second Reformation, but that Reformation came. And however dark the prospects now before a third Reformation, that Reformation shall come! The world is nearing the last stage of its history, as pointed out by Daniel in the dream of the monarch of Babylon, prior to the overwhelming and triumphant progress of the stone-kingdom, cut out of the mountain. That immense image of Nebuchadnezzar, in its gold and silver and brass and iron, represented those four vast monarchies which, in their successive periods, swayed the government of the world. But in the fact that the image was in the form of a man, the spirit that actuated these four empires of earth is strikingly emphasized—the spirit of the idolatry of humanity. They were all embodiments of the man-will: Babels for the incarnation of heaven-daring human aspirations, and so carried within even their colossal proportions the elements of confusion and death. A similar lust of humanity for supremacy characterises those Kingdoms, represented by the ten toes of the image, into which the fourth Roman monarchy parted. But soon now, therefore, must sound out the last blast of the seventh trumpet, when the idolatry of humanity in earth's kingdoms shall fall, and the spirit and will of Christ pervade and beautify all the institutions, ecclesiastical and imperial, of the world. Yes, the kingdom "not in hands" shall shatter yet all the usurped rights of the world-powers. There shall be a glorious reversal of the disaster in Eden. That old Adamic principle of a legislative sovereignty in man, which has convulsed the nations for six thousand years, shall be utterly renounced and crucified the world over. Ruin irreparable shall befall the entire empire of Satan, who shall be chained in his lake, as the pealing note of that trumpet of God shall swell over all the earth. The throne of God and the Lamb shall be erected by public consent as the unifying source and centre for people, churches,

and empires. The whole world of humanity shall be redeemed from sin and its curse, be animated by one Spirit, and triumphant in one Lord.

May not the true Christian, then, as he thinks of the idolatrous form in the dream of the monarch of Babylon, and looks in the watches of the night for the dawn, when Christ Jesus his Lord shall be honoured throughout the world, behold rising before his eyes in his dream another colossal figure; and its head is gold, and its breasts and arms gold, and its belly and thighs gold, and its legs and feet and toes gold; yea all of it "is as the most fine gold;" and the head representing the powers of the great American Continents; the breast and arms, Asia; the belly and thighs, Africa; the legs and feet, Europe, and the toes the Isles of the Sea—the British Isles with the rest. And the form of the great earth-filling figure is that of Jesus of Nazareth, the Man of Jehovah's right hand. And lo! "I saw heaven opened, and I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

"Come, then, and, added to Thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
Thou who alone art worthy! It was Thine
By ancient covenant, ere nature's birth;
And Thou hast made it Thine by purchase since
And overpaid its value with Thy blood.
Thy saints proclaim Thee King! And in their hearts
Thy title is engraven with a pen
Dipp'd in the fountain of eternal love."

THE NATIONAL COVENANT.

Greyfriars Churchyard, Edinburgh.

THE NATIONAL COVENANT:

OR,

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

Subscribed at first by the King's Majesty and his household, in the year of God 1580; *thereafter by persons of all ranks in the year of God* 1581, *by Ordinance of the Lords of Secret Council, and Acts of the General Assembly; subscribed again by all sorts of persons in the year of God* 1590. *Secondly: And with Ordinance of the Lords of Secret Council, and Acts of General Assembly, subscribed again by all sorts of persons in the year of God* 1590. *Thirdly: And with Ordinance of Council, at the desire of the General Assembly; with their general bond for maintenance of the true religion, and of the King's Majesty; and now subscribed in the year of God* 1638, *by us, Noblemen, Baronets, Gentlemen, Burgesses, Ministers, and Commons under subscribed; and, together with a resolution and promise, for the causes after expressed, to maintain the true religion and King's Majesty, according to the Confession aforesaid, and the Acts of Parliament, the so much of which followeth:—*

We all and every one of us under-written, protest, That, after long and due examination of our own consciences in matters of true and false religion, we are now thoroughly resolved in the truth by the Spirit and Word of God: and therefore we believe with our hearts, confess with our mouths, subscribe with our hands, and constantly affirm, before God and the whole world, that this only is the true Christian faith and religion, pleasing God, and bringing salvation to man, which now is, by the mercy of God, revealed to the world by the preaching of the blessed evangel; and is received, believed, and defended by many and sundry notable kirks and realms, but chiefly by the Kirk

of Scotland, the King's Majesty, and three estates of this realm, as God's eternal truth, and only ground of our salvation; as more particularly is expressed in the Confession of our Faith, established and publicly confirmed by sundry Acts of Parliaments, and now of a long time hath been openly professed by the King's Majesty, and whole body of this realm both in burgh and land. To the which Confession and Form of Religion we willingly agree in our conscience in all points, as unto God's undoubted truth and verity, grounded only upon His written Word. And therefore we abhor and detest all contrary religion and doctrine; but chiefly all kind of Papistry in general and particular heads, even as they are now damned and confuted by the Word of God and Kirk of Scotland. But, in special, we detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman Antichrist upon the Scriptures of God, upon the Kirk, the civil magistrate, and consciences of men; all his tyrannous laws made upon indifferent things against our Christian liberty; his erroneous doctrine against the sufficiency of the written Word, the perfection of the law, the office of Christ, and His blessed evangel; his corrupted doctrine concerning original sin, our natural inability and rebellion to God's law, our justification by faith only, our imperfect sanctification and obedience to the law; the nature, number, and use of the holy sacraments; his five bastard sacraments, with all his rites, ceremonies, and false doctrine, added to the ministration of the true sacraments without the word of God; his cruel judgment against infants departing without the sacrament; his absolute necessity of baptism; his blasphemous opinion of transubstantiation, or real presence of Christ's body in the elements, and receiving of the same by the wicked, or bodies of men; his dispensations with solemn oaths, perjuries, and degrees of marriage forbidden in the Word; his cruelty against the innocent divorced; his devilish mass; his blasphemous priesthood; his profane sacrifice for sins of the dead and

the quick; his canonization of men; calling upon angels or saints departed, worshipping of imagery, relics, and crosses; dedicating of kirks, altars, days; vows to creatures; his purgatory, prayers for the dead; praying or speaking in a strange language, with his processions, and blasphemous litany, and multitude of advocates or mediators; his manifold orders, auricular confession; his desperate and uncertain repentance; his general and doubtsome faith; his satisfactions of men for their sins; his justification by works, *opus operatum*, works of supererogation, merits, pardons, peregrinations, and stations; his holy water, baptizing of bells, conjuring of spirits, crossing, sayning, anointing, conjuring, hallowing of God's good creatures, with the superstitious opinion joined therewith; his worldly monarchy, and wicked hierarchy; his three solemn vows, with all his shavellings of sundry sorts; his erroneous and bloody decrees made at Trent, with all the subscribers or approvers of that cruel and bloody band, conjured against the Kirk of God. And finally, we detest all his vain allegories, rites, signs, and traditions brought in the Kirk, without or against the word of God, and doctrine of this true reformed Kirk; to the which we join ourselves willingly, in doctrine, faith, religion, discipline, and use of the holy sacraments, as lively members of the same in Christ our head: promising and swearing, by the great name of the LORD our GOD, that we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and discipline of this Kirk, and shall defend the same, according to our vocation and power, all the days of our lives; under the pains contained in the law, and danger both of body and soul in the day of God's fearful judgment.

And seeing that many are stirred up by Satan, and that Roman Antichrist, to promise, swear, subscribe, and for a time use the holy sacraments in the Kirk deceitfully, against their own conscience; minding hereby, first, under the external cloak of religion, to corrupt and subvert

secretly God's true religion within the Kirk; and afterward, when time may serve, to become open enemies and persecutors of the same, under vain hope of the Pope's dispensation, devised against the Word of God, to his greater confusion, and their double condemnation in the day of the Lord Jesus: we therefore, willing to take away all suspicion of hypocrisy, and of such double dealing with God and His Kirk, protest, and call the Searcher of all hearts for witness, that our minds and hearts do fully agree with this our Confession, promise, oath, and subscription: so that we are not moved with any worldly respect, but are persuaded only in our conscience, through the knowledge and love of God's true religion imprinted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, as we shall answer to Him in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed.

And because we perceive that the quietness and stability of our religion and Kirk doth depend upon the safety and good behaviour of the King's Majesty, as upon a comfortable instrument of God's mercy granted to this country, for the maintaining of His Kirk and ministration of justice amongst us; we protest and promise with our hearts, under the same oath, hand-writ, and pains, that we shall defend His person and authority with our goods, bodies, and lives, in the defence of Christ His evangel, liberties of our country, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquity, against all enemies within this realm or without, as we desire our God to be a strong and merciful defender to us in the day of our death, and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory eternally. *Amen.*

Likeas many Acts of Parliament, not only in general do abrogate, annul, and rescind all laws, statutes, acts, constitutions, canons civil or municipal, with all other ordinances, and practique penalties whatsoever, made in prejudice of the true religion, and professors thereof; or

of the true Kirk, discipline, jurisdiction, and freedom thereof; or in favours of idolatry and superstition, or of the Papistical kirk: As Act 3, Act 31, Parl. 1; Act 23, Parl. 11; Act 114, Parl. 12, of King James VI. That Papistry and superstition may be utterly suppressed, according to the intention of the Acts of Parliament, repeated in the 5th Act, Parl. 20, King James VI. And to that end they ordain all Papists and Priests to be punished with manifold civil and ecclesiastical pains, as adversaries to God's true religion preached, and by law established, within this realm, Act 24, Parl. 11, King James VI.; as common enemies to all Christian government, Act 18, Parl. 16, King James VI.; as rebellers and gainstanders of our Sovereign Lord's authority, Act 47, Parl. 3, King James VI.; and as idolaters, Act 104, Parl. 7, King James VI. But also in particular, by and attour the Confession of Faith, do abolish and condemn the Pope's authority and jurisdiction out of this land, and ordains the maintainers thereof to be punished, Act 2, Parl. 1; Act 51, Parl. 3; Act 106, Parl. 7; Act 114, Parl. 12, King James VI.: do condemn the Pope's erroneous doctrine, or any other erroneous doctrine repugnant to any of the articles of the true and Christian religion, publicly preached, and by law established in this realm; and ordains the spreaders and makers of books or libels, or letters or writs of that nature to be punished, Act 46, Parl. 3; Act 106, Parl. 7; Act 24, Parl. 11, King James VI.: do condemn all baptism conform to the Pope's kirk, and the idolatry of the mass; and ordains all sayers, wilful hearers and concealers of the mass, the maintainers and resetters of the priests, Jesuits, trafficking Papists, to be punished without any exception or restriction, Act 5, Parl. 1; Act 120, Parl. 12; Act 164, Parl. 13; Act 193, Parl. 14; Act 1, Parl. 19; Act 5, Parl. 20, King James VI.: do condemn all erroneous books and writs containing erroneous doctrine against the religion presently professed,

or containing superstitious rites and ceremonies Papistical, whereby the people are greatly abused, and ordains the home-bringers of them to be punished, Act 25, Parl. 11, King James VI. : do condemn the monuments and dregs of bygone idolatry, as going to crosses, observing the festival days of saints, and such other superstitious and Papistical rites, to the dishonour of God, contempt of true religion, and fostering of great error among the people ; and ordains the users of them to be punished for the second fault, as idolaters, Act 104, Parl. 7, King James VI.

Likeas many Acts of Parliament are conceived for maintenance of God's true and Christian religion, and the purity thereof, in doctrine and sacraments of the true Church of God, the liberty and freedom thereof, in her national, synodal assemblies, presbyteries, sessions, policy, discipline, and jurisdiction thereof; as that purity of religion, and liberty of the Church was used, professed, exercised, preached, and confessed, according to the reformation of religion in this realm : As for instance, the 99th Act, Parl. 7 ; Act 25, Parl. 11 ; Act 114, Parl. 12 ; Act 160, Parl. 13, of King James VI., ratified by the 4th Act of King Charles. So that the 6th Act, Parl. 1, and 68th Act, Parl. 6, of King James VI., in the year of God 1579, declare the ministers of the blessed evangel, whom God of His mercy had raised up, or hereafter should raise, agreeing with them that then lived, in doctrine and administration of the sacraments ; and the people that professed Christ, as He was then offered in the evangel, and doth communicate with the holy sacraments (as in the reformed kirks of this realm they were presently administrate) according to the Confession of Faith, to be the true and holy kirk of Christ Jesus within this realm. And decerns and declares all and sundry, who either gainsay the Word of the evangel received and approved as the heads of the Confession of Faith, professed in Parliament in the year

of God 1560, specified also in the first Parliament of King James VI., and ratified in this present Parliament, more particularly do express; or that refuse the administration of the holy sacraments as they were then ministrated—to be no members of the said Kirk within this realm, and true religion presently professed, so long as they keep themselves so divided from the society of Christ's body. And the subsequent Act 69, Parl. 6, of King James VI., declares, that there is no other face of kirk, nor other face of religion, than was presently at that time by the favour of God established within this realm: "Which therefore is ever styled God's true religion, Christ's true religion, the true and Christian religion, and a perfect religion;" which, by manifold Acts of Parliament, all within this realm are bound to profess, to subscribe the articles thereof, the Confession of Faith, to recant all doctrine and errors repugnant to any of the said articles, Acts 4 and 9, Parl. 1; Acts 45, 46, 47, Parl. 3; Act 71, Parl. 6; Act 106, Parl. 7; Act 24, Parl. 11; Act 123, Parl. 12; Acts 194 and 197, Parl. 14, of King James VI. And all magistrates, sheriffs, &c., on the one part, are ordained to search, apprehend, and punish all contraveners: For instance Act 5, Parl. 1; Act 104, Parl. 7; Act 25, Parl. 11, King James VI.; and that notwithstanding of the King's Majesty's licences on the contrary, which are discharged, and declared to be of no force, in so far as they tend in any wise to the prejudice and hinder of the execution of the Acts of Parliament against Papists and adversaries of true religion, Act 106, Parl. 7, King James VI. On the other part, in the 47th Act, Parl. 3, King James VI., it is declared and ordained, Seeing the cause of God's true religion and his Highness's authority are so joined, as the hurt of the one is common to both, that none shall be reputed as loyal and faithful subjects to our Sovereign Lord, or his authority, but be punishable as rebellers and gainstanders of the same, who shall not give their confession

and make their profession of the said true religion: and that they who, after defection, shall give the confession of their faith of new, they shall promise to continue therein in time coming, to maintain our Sovereign Lord's authority, and at the uttermost of their power to fortify, assist, and maintain the true preachers and professors of Christ's religion, against whatsoever enemies and gainstanders of the same; and namely, against all such, of whatsoever nation, estate, or degree they be of, that have joined or bound themselves, or have assisted, or assist, to set forward and execute the cruel decrees of the Council of Trent, contrary to the true preachers and professors of the word of God: which is repeated, word by word, in the articles of pacification at Perth, the 23rd of February, 1572; approved by Parliament the last of April, 1573: ratified in Parliament 1587, and related Act 123, Parl. 12, of King James VI.; with this addition, "That they are bound to resist all treasonable uproars and hostilities raised against the true religion, the King's Majesty, and the true professors."

Likeas, all lieges are bound to maintain the King's Majesty's royal person and authority, the authority of Parliaments, without the which neither any laws or lawful judicatories can be established, Acts 130 and 131, Parl. 8, King James VI., and the subjects' liberties, who ought only to live and be governed by the King's laws, the common laws of this realm allenarly, Act 48, Parl. 3, King James I.; Act 79, Parl. 6, King James IV.; repeated in the Act 131, Parl. 8, King James VI.; which if they be innovated and prejudged, "the commission anent the union of the two kingdoms of Scotland and England, which is the sole act of the 17th Parl. of King James VI., declares," such confusion would ensue as this realm could be no more a free monarchy; because, by the fundamental laws, ancient privileges, offices, and liberties of this kingdom, not only the princely authority of his Majesty's royal descent hath been these many ages

maintained, but also the people's security of their lands, livings, rights, offices, liberties, and dignities preserved. And therefore, for the preservation of the said true religion, laws, and liberties of this kingdom, it is statute by the 8th Act, Parl. 1, repeated in the 99th Act, Parl. 7, ratified in the 23rd Act, Parl. 11, and 114th Act, Parl. 12, of King James VI., and 4th Act, Parl. 1, of King Charles I.—"That all Kings and Princes at their coronation, and reception of their princely authority, shall make their faithful promise by their solemn oath, in the presence of the eternal God, that enduring the whole time of their lives, they shall serve the same eternal God to the uttermost of their power, according as He hath required in His most holy Word, contained in the Old and New Testament; and according to the same Word, shall maintain the true religion of Christ Jesus, the preaching of His holy Word, the due and right ministration of the sacraments now received and preached within this realm, (according to the Confession of Faith immediately preceding,) and shall abolish and gainstand all false religion contrary to the same; and shall rule the people committed to their charge, according to the will and command of God revealed in His foresaid Word, and according to the laudable laws and constitutions received in this realm, nowise repugnant to the said will of the eternal God; and shall procure, to the uttermost of their power, to the Kirk of God, and whole Christian people, true and perfect peace in all time coming: and that they shall be careful to root out of their empire all heretics and enemies to the true worship of God, who shall be convicted by the true Kirk of God of the foresaid crimes." Which was also observed by his Majesty, at his coronation in Edinburgh, 1633, as may be seen in the order of the coronation.

In obedience to the commandment of God, conform to the practice of the godly in former times, and according to the laudable example of our worthy and religious progenitors,

and of many yet living amongst us, which was warranted also by Act of Council, commanding a general band to be made and subscribed by his Majesty's subjects of all ranks; for two causes: one was, For defending the true religion, as it was then reformed, and is expressed in the Confession of Faith above written, and a former large Confession established by sundry acts of lawful General Assemblies and of Parliaments, unto which it hath relation, set down in public Catechisms; and which hath been for many years, with a blessing from Heaven, preached and professed in this Kirk and kingdom, as God's undoubted truth, grounded only upon His written Word. The other cause was, For maintaining the King's Majesty, his person and estate; the true worship of God and the King's authority being so straitly joined, as that they had the same friends, and common enemies, and did stand and fall together. And finally, being convinced in our minds, and confessing with our mouths, that the present and succeeding generations in this land are bound to keep the foresaid national oath and subscription inviolable,

We Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burgesses, Ministers, and Commons under-subscribing, considering divers times before, and especially at this time, the danger of the true reformed religion, of the King's honour, and of the public peace of the kingdom, by the manifold innovations and evils, generally contained, and particularly mentioned in our late supplications, complaints, and protestations; do hereby profess, and before God, His angels, and the world, solemnly declare, That with our whole hearts we agree, and resolve all the days of our life constantly to adhere unto and to defend the foresaid true religion, and (forbearing the practice of all novations already introduced in the matters of the worship of God, or approbation of the corruptions of the public government of the Kirk, or civil places and power of kirkmen, till they be tried and allowed in free Assemblies and in Parliament) to labour, by all means, to recover the purity

and liberty of the Gospel, as it was established and professed before the foresaid novations. And because, after due examination, we plainly perceive, and undoubtedly believe, that the innovations and evils contained in our supplications, complaints, and protestations, have no warrant of the Word of God, are contrary to the articles of the foresaid Confession, to the intention and meaning of the blessed reformers of religion in this land, to the above-written Acts of Parliament; and do sensibly tend to the re-establishing of the Popish religion and tyranny, and to the subversion and ruin of the true reformed religion, and of our liberties, laws, and estates; we also declare, That the foresaid Confessions are to be interpreted, and ought to be understood of the foresaid novations and evils, no less than if every one of them had been expressed in the foresaid Confessions; and that we are obliged to detest and abhor them, amongst other particular heads of Papistry abjured therein. And therefore, from the knowledge and conscience of our duty to God, to our King and country, without any worldly respect or inducement, so far as human infirmity will suffer, wishing a further measure of the grace of God for this effect; we promise and swear, by the GREAT NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD, to continue in the profession and obedience of the aforesaid religion; and that we shall defend the same, and resist all these contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation, and to the uttermost of that power that God hath put in our hands, all the days of our life.

And in like manner, with the same heart, we declare before God and men, That we have no intention nor desire to attempt any thing that may turn to the dishonour of God, or to the diminution of the King's greatness and authority; but, on the contrary, we promise and swear, That we shall, to the uttermost of our power, with our means and lives, stand to the defence of our dread Sovereign the King's Majesty, his person and authority, in the defence and

preservation of the foresaid true religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom; as also to the mutual defence and assistance every one of us of another, in the same cause of maintaining the true religion, and his Majesty's authority, with our best counsel, our bodies, means, and whole power, against all sorts of persons whatsoever; so that whatsoever shall be done to the least of us for that cause, shall be taken as done to us all in general, and to every one of us in particular. And that we shall neither directly nor indirectly suffer ourselves to be divided or withdrawn, by whatsoever suggestion, combination, allurement, or terror, from this blessed and loyal conjunction: nor shall cast in any let or impediment that may stay or hinder any such resolution as by common consent shall be found to conduce for so good ends; but, on the contrary, shall by all lawful means labour to further and promote the same: and if any such dangerous and divisive motion be made to us by word or writ, we, and every one of us, shall either suppress it, or, if need be, shall incontinent make the same known, that it may be timeously obviated. Neither do we fear the foul aspersions of rebellion, combination, or what else our adversaries, from their craft and malice, would put upon us: seeing what we do is well warranted, and ariseth from an unfeigned desire to maintain the true worship of God, the majesty of our King, and the peace of the kingdom, for the common happiness of ourselves and our posterity.

And because we cannot look for a blessing from God upon our proceedings, except with our profession and subscription we join such a life and conversation as becometh Christians who have renewed their covenant with God; we therefore faithfully promise for ourselves, our followers, and all others under us, both in public, and in our particular families, and personal carriage, to endeavour to keep ourselves within the bounds of Christian liberty, and to be good examples to others of all godliness, soberness,

and righteousness, and of every duty we owe to God and man.

And, that this our union and conjunction may be observed without violation, we call the LIVING GOD, THE SEARCHER OF OUR HEARTS, to witness, who knoweth this to be our sincere desire and unfeigned resolution, as we shall answer to JESUS CHRIST in the great day, and under the pain of God's everlasting wrath, and of infamy and loss of all honour and respect in this world: most humbly beseeching the LORD to strengthen us by His HOLY SPIRIT for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings with a happy success; that religion and righteousness may flourish in the land, to the glory of GOD, the honour of our King, and peace and comfort of us all. In witness whereof, we have subscribed with our hands all the premises.

The article of this Covenant within written and within subscribed, which was at the first subscription referred to the determination of the General Assembly, being now determined, on the fifth of December, 1638, and hereby the five articles of Perth, the government of the Kirk by bishops, being declared to be abjured and removed, and the civil places and power of kirkmen declared unlawful, we subscribe according to the determination of the said lawful and free General Assembly, holden at Glasgow.

THE NATIONAL COVENANT:

EXHORTATION TO THE LORDS OF COUNCIL.*

May it please your Lordship,

We, the ministers of the Gospel, conveened at this so necessary a time do find ourselves bound to represent, as unto all, so in special unto your lordship what comfortable experience we have of the wonderful favour of God, upon the renewing of the Confession of Faith and Covenant: what peace and comfort hath filled the hearts of all God's people; what resolutions and beginnings of reformation of manners are sensibly perceived in all parts of the kingdom, above any measure that ever we did find, or could have expected; how great glory the Lord hath received hereby, and what confidence we have (if this sunshine be not eclipsed by some sinful division or defection) that God shall make this a blessed kingdom, to the contentment of the king's majesty, and joy of all his good subjects, according as God hath promised in His good Word, and performed to His people in former times: and therefore we are forced, from our hearts, both to wish and entreat your lordship to be partaker and promover of this joy and happiness by your subscription, when your lordship shall think it convenient; and in the mean time, that your lordship would not be sparing to give a free testimony to the truth, as a timely and

* This Exhortation was prepared by "Reverend Ministers of the Gospel," who met at Edinburgh, February, 1638, and "sent to every one of the Lords of Council severally," inviting them to subscribe the Covenant.

necessary expression of your tender affection to the cause of Christ, now calling for help at your hands. Your lordship's profession of the true religion, as it was reformed in this land; the national oath of this kingdom, sundry times sworn and subscribed, obliging us who live at this time; the duty of a good patriot, the office and trust of a privy councillor, the present employment, to have place amongst those that are first acquainted with his majesty's pleasure; the consideration that this is the time of trial of your lordship's affection to religion, the respect which your lordship hath unto your fame, both now and hereafter, when things shall be recorded to posterity; and the remembrance, that not only the eyes of men and angels are upon your lordship's carriage, but also that the Lord Jesus is a secret witness now to observe, and shall be an open judge hereafter, to reward and confess every man before His Father, that confesseth Him before men: all of these, and each of them, beside your lordship's personal and particular obligations to God, do call for no less at your lordship's hands, in the case of so great and singular necessity: and we also do expect so much at this time, according as your lordship at the hour of death would be free of the terror of God, and be refreshed with the comfortable remembrance of a word spoken in season for Christ Jesus, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

THE NATIONAL COVENANT.

SERMON AT ST. ANDREWS.

*BY ALEXANDER HENDERSON.**

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning; Thou hast the dew of thy youth."—*Psalm* cx. 3.

It is, beloved in the Lord, very expedient, and sometimes most necessar, that we turn away our eyes from kings and their greatness, from kirkmen and men of state, and that we turn them towards another object, and look only to Jesus Christ, who is the great king, priest, and prophet of His kirk. The godly in former times, who were kings, priests, and prophets themselves, used to do this, and that before Christ; and mickle more is it required of us now in thir days, seeing we live in troublesome times: for there is a comfort that comes to the children of God that way. The first part of this psalm expresses to us the threefold office of Christ, and the second part of it expresses the valiant acts our Lord Jesus does by these His three offices, but especially by His Princely office: whilk indeed is His worst studied office by many men in the world. We would, many of us, willingly take Him for our prophet to teach us, and for our

*Aberdeen, Crail and St. Andrews were the only burghs in Scotland that had no Commissioners at the renewing of the National Covenant in Edinburgh. Henderson was appointed to proceed to St. Andrews to secure its approval of the movement, and his mission resulted in complete success. This sermon was preached there about the end of March, 1638.

priest to intercede for us, and be a sacrifice for our sins, but when it comes to His Princely office, to direct us what we should do, then we would be at that whilk seems best in our own eyes.

His Princely office is described unto us here three ways. 1. In relation to God Himself; "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at My right hand." 2. In respect of His enemies; "The Lord sall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thy enemies." Were His enemies never so many, and never so despiteful against Him, yet He sall rule in the midst of them. And indeed this is a very admirable part of His kingly office, that even in the midst of His enemies He sall have a kingdom for Himself, in despite of them, and all that they can do or say against it. 3. The third, wherein the glory of His kingly office consists, is in thir words that I have read to you: and that is in relation to, and in respect of the subjects of the kingdom of Christ. And they are described here to be a people belonging to Jesus Christ; to be a people on whom God manifests His power; and they are a most willing people, a people who count holiness to be their chiefest beauty. And they are so marvellously multiplied, that it is a wonder to consider of it: there is no moe drops of dew will fall, nor they will not fall any faster in a morning than the Lord will multiply them, when He is pleased to do so. And although the Lord sometimes multiply them in a secret manner, yet still the multitude stands to be true.

That the purposes may be the better tane up by you who will take heed to them, consider of these parts in the words. 1. The persons of whom the Psalmist speaks here. "Thy people." 2. The properties of these people in this day: They sall be a willing people; a holy people; a people who sall be miraculously multiplied. And so their properties is willingness, holiness, and multiplication.

Many proofs has been of the truth of this prophecy

since the beginning—that the Lord's people sall be willing in the day of His power, in the beauties of holiness; from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth. There were many evident proofs of the truth of this since the beginning of the plantation of the gospel into the world. And surely we know not a more evident and notable proof of it than this same that is presently into this land, nor think I that there be any who can show the parallel of it. The Lord has made them willingly to offer up themselves, and all that they have, for Him. And they are a people of holiness; albeit it is true, indeed, many has been brought to it from this quarter and that quarter of the land, since the beginning, to be more holy than they used to be. And if the multiplication of them be not wonderful, I cannot tell what ye will tell me of that is more wonderful; so that indeed it is a miracle to all who hear of it. In the time while Christ was upon the earth there were two sorts of miracles to be seen:—first, Christ made the dumb to speak, the blind to see, the lame to walk, &c.: this indeed was a great miracle. The second sort of miracles was of him who did see these things wrought by Christ, and yet for all that, did not believe in Him who did work them. Even so there are two sorts of wonders in this same time wherein we live:—first, how the Lord has multiplied His people, and made them to be so many, whereas, at the first, we thought them to be but very few; secondly, we cannot but wonder at these who observes not God's hand into it: and indeed we cannot but wonder that any can be so blind that they observe not the very hand and finger of God in the work. Ay, we who have been witnesses to it, for the most part, we cannot but wonder at the work of God in it. It has not been man's wit has done the work, and multiply so, but only God has done it; and we cannot tell how; but only we see that there are numbers continually multiplied.

I. "Thy people." Here is a note of property, and a note of distinction. First, it is a note of property. They are God's people—God has absolute right over a people, and there is none who has any right over them but He alone. It's true all people are under Him, but He calls not all His people after this manner. All things are for God, and subordinate to Him; the absolute power to rule and to command these people is in God's hand, and He will not give that power to any other over them: and He has good reason so to do. 1. Because He was thinking upon His people from all eternity; and there was none who did that but only He. 2. He made us and fashioned us in time; and neither any authority or magistrate did that. 3. Who is it that provides means for their sustenance daily, and makes these means effectual, but only the Lord? A man cannot make one pyle (blade) of grass, or one ear of corn, to grow for thy entertainment, but only the Lord: and when thou hast gotten these things, it is the blessing of God that makes them effectual. For when ye say the grace to your meat, say ye it to man? No, ye say it only to God. So that every way ye are God's people. And then, whilk is more, and therefore we are bound to be His people, no man can redeem the life of his brother, nor give a price sufficient for his life, let be (let alone) for his soul, and yet the Lord, He has redeemed us from hell, and from the grave; and therefore we belong to Him. Then is it not the Lord who enters in covenant with thee, and says, I will remember thy sins no more? Then albeit all the world should remember thy ill deeds, yet if the Lord remember them not, then thou art blessed. It is He who says, I will write My laws in your hearts, to lead you here: it is He who puts us in the estate of grace while we are here, and so puts us in hope of glory after this life. It is He who sall be our judge at that great day. And so ye are the Lord's people, by way of property.

And this was it that made the apostles so bold, when it

was alleged that they had done that whilk was not right: they made the enemies themselves judges, and says, "Whether it be right in your sight to obey God rather than man, judge ye." As if they had said, It's true indeed we are mickle obliged to man, but we are more obliged to God than to all men; for what is it that man can do to us, either good or ill, but God can do that als (also) and more? And upon this ground, in the next chapter, they draw this conclusion,—It behoveth us rather to obey God than man. And so, first, they reason with the adversars themselves upon it; and seeing that they could not deny it, upon that they draw up their conclusion. I mark this for this end, that whenever ye are enjoined to do anything by any man, that then ye would not forget this dignity and power that God has over you, and that ye are the people of Jesus Christ; and therefore no man ought to enjoin anything to be done by you, but that for the whilk he has a warrant from God. There is a great controversy now about disobedience to superiors, and the contempt of those who are in authority: but there is not a word of that, whether God be obeyed or not, or if He be disobeyed by any. Fy, that people should sell themselves over to the slavery of man, when the Lord has only sovereign power over them! I would not have you to think that a whole country of people are appointed only to uphold the grandeur of five or six men. No, they are ordained to be magistrates for your good. And sall we think that a ministry shines into a land for the upholding of the grandeur of some few persons. No, all these things are ordained for the good of God's people; and, seeing that it is so, sall ye then make yourselves like to asses and slaves, to be subject to all that men pleases to impose upon you? No, no; try anything that they impose upon you, before ye obey it, if it is warranted by God or not; because God is the only superior over you.

2. Secondly. "Thy people." This also is a note of distinction; for every people are God's people, but there is a distinction among them. All people, it's true, are God's people by right of creation: why therefore says he, *Thy* people, and not *all* people? Because all people belong not to Christ. God has authority over all indeed, but in a special manner He enters into covenant with some. All people who are subject to Him in His providence are not His peculiar people, His royal nation, His holy priesthood, His chosen generation, but only those of them who belong to Christ; those are properly termed to be His people. And we should remember of this, that those who are the people of God, they have notable privileges; they have all things that any people should have, and, whatever we should be, they have that. Where any are the people of God, there there is blessedness indeed, for they have His truth for their security, they have His love for their comfort, His power for their defence. The Lord God, He takes His people into His bosom, and with every soul He does so, and says, "I the Lord thy God enters in covenant with thee, and renews the covenant that before I made with thee." And then He lays a necessity upon thee, by His providence, that thou must enter into covenant with Him; and then He says to thee, "I will not remember thy sins any more; I know they are heinous, great, and many, but because thou desires that they should not be remembered, therefore I will not remember them. And because when ye have renewed your covenant with Me, ye will be aye in a fear to break it again, therefore I will write My law in your hearts. And so whatever I promise to you, I will perform it freely when ye are in covenant with Me; and whatever ye promise to Me, being in covenant with Me, I sall perform it for you also, at least I sall give you strength to perform it." And therefore to the end that ye may be perfectly blessed, enter into a covenant with God; and without ye be in covenant

with Him, ye sall be in nothing but perpetual misery. I would have all of you to think this to be your only health, wealth, and peace, and your only glory in the world, to be in covenant with God; and so that ye are the people of God, I would not have you to count men to be rich and glorious men by their estates in the world—that he can spend so many chalders of victual yearly, or so many thousand merks. O, a silly, beggarly glory is this! Naked thou came into the world, and naked thou must go out of it again. But see how mickle thou has of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, how far thou art forward in the work of repentance, faith, &c., and such good actions. Learn to set your affections on things that are above, and testify it by your actions.

II. "In the day of Thy power." This is the time when the people of God sall be willing, even in the day of His power; that is, in the day of the power of Jesus Christ. The day of His own resurrection from the dead was one day of His power: He says, "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again;" "Destroy this temple, and I will build it up again in three days:" He meant of the temple of His body: and indeed there was none who could raise His dead body out of the grave, but only Himself. A second day of His power sall be the day of the resurrection of our bodies out of the dust. But there is another day that is meant of here than any of these, and that is the day of our first resurrection out of the grave of sin, by the preaching of the gospel. And there is good reason for it, why this should be called a day of His power. First, because it is the power of Jesus Christ that brings the purity of the gospel into a land; and we may indeed say that it was only His power that brought the gospel into this land. It had not authority then to countenance it, for all those that were in authority were against it: and counsel and policy, and all the clergy, and the multitude, all of them,

were against it; and yet, for all that, the Lord brought in the purity of the gospel into this land, and established it here against all these. Secondly, when the purity of the gospel is into a land, it is only the power of God that makes it effectual for turning of souls unto Himself, and raising them out of the grave of sin, wherein they are so fast buried. So when the Lord first sends the gospel, we are lying into the grave of sin; and the devil, and the world, and all these enemies they are watching the grave, to see that we rise not out of it; and when we are beginning to rise they are busy to hold us down. And think not that we can rise, and lift up ourselves from so base to so high ane estate, without the power of God. No, no. Third. When the gospel is into a land, it is only the power of Jesus Christ that makes it to continue, for if the Lord make not the gospel to continue into a land, it will not stay there. And there is no less power required either to bring the gospel into a land, or to make it effectual, or to make it to continue, than was required to raise the dead body of Christ out of the grave, or will be required to raise ours.

I would have you consider here, that all times are not alike, but there is a time of the Lord's power; that all days are not alike, but there is a day of the Lord's power; a time when the saints of God sall be weak, a time when they sall be strong; a time when some sall rise up to persecute the saints, a time when others sall rise up to help them; a time when the Lord withholds His power, and a time when He kythes (shews it); a time when the people draws back from the Lord, and a time when they turn to Him again. There has been a day of defection in this land this time past, and now there is a time of the Lord's power in bringing back this defection again: and indeed this very instant time that now is is ane hour of that day of the Lord's power, and I will shew you two or three reasons for

it. 1. The Lord did arise and manifested His power when the enemies were become insolent, and when they had determined that they would set up such a mode of worship as they thought meet, and noways according to the pattern shown upon the mount. And indeed the Lord, He uses ordinarily to do this, that even when the enemies of His people are become insolent, and they have determined that they will do such a thing instantly, then He takes them in their own snare. 2. To show that it is the Lord's power only that works a work, He uses to begin at very small beginnings; and so the Lord did in this same work;—He began at first with some few, and these not honourable, and yet now He has made it to cover the whole land through all the quarters thereof. 3. This is also a note of the power of God, that He has touched the hearts of people, that there was never such a howling and a weeping heard amongst them this long time as there is now; and yet it is not a weeping for sorrow, but a weeping for joy. How oft has there been preachings in the most part of the congregations of this land this long time past, and yet people have never found the power of it in working upon their hearts; and yet within this short space, when the Lord has renewed His covenant with them, and they with Him, He has displayed His banner, and made His power known in working upon the hearts of people. 4. In this the power of God is manifestly to be seen in this work, that the Lord has made all the devices and plots of the adversars, that they have devised to further their own ends, to work contrair to these ends, and to work for the good of His own work. And, indeed, we may say that it has not been so mickle the courage and wisdom of these, that has been for this cause, that has brought it so far on, but the very plots and devices of the adversars that they have devised for their own good. This also is ane evident token of the Lord's power.

And now since the Lord did arise when the enemies

were become insolent, since He began at so small beginnings and has brought it so far, since the Lord has wrought so on the hearts of people now, and since He has made all the plots of the enemies to work against themselves, and for His people, let us give this glory to God, and reverence Him, and say that it is only by His power that the work is done, and that He has been pleased to manifest Himself into the work. Beloved, we may comfort ourselves in this, if all this has been done by the power of God, then we need not to fear the power of men ; men can do nothing against God. The Lord may indeed put His kirk to a trial, but He will not suffer her to be overthrown by any. And indeed, any who hears and knows what the enemies are doing here may see that they are not fighting against men, but against God, and that they are kicking against the pricks.

III. Now, for the properties of thir people. The first of them is *willing*. The Lord's people are a people of willingness in the day of His power : and indeed thir three go very well together, the people of God, the power of God, and a willing people. When the power of God works upon His people then He makes them to be a willing people. And indeed, it is no small matter to see a people willing in a good cause, for by nature we are unwilling, and naturally we are not set to affect anything that is right, except it be through hypocrisy. Our hearts they are contrary to God ; they are proud, disobedient, rebellious, and he who sees and knows his own heart sees all this to be in it ; and he knows that it is the Lord who cries upon him, in the day of His own power, and frames his heart in a new mould, and makes it to be so nimble and cheerful in any good work,—that albeit they had been before running with all their speed to the devil, yet He makes them to stand still in the way and look about them, and consider what they have been doing, and then to turn about again. Albeit thou were like to Paul, persecuting the

Church, yet He can then make a preacher of thee, and so affright thee that thou sall not know where thou art, but say, "Here am I, Lord:" and albeit thou were as unwilling to go as the prophet Moses, yet He will make thee to say, "Here am I, Lord, send me," and be as Elisha, when Elias cuist (cast) his mantle about him, then he could not stay any longer. And when Christ comes to Peter, and calls upon them, they cannot stay any longer, but incontinent they leave all and follows Him. I will not now begin to make any large discourse of the invincible power of God; I say no more of it now but only this for your use. If ye kent this power of God, it would make you ready and willing to give a confession to Him this day, and even to confess Him before men, and to forsake all and follow Him. Ye who are ignorant of the power of God, take heed to this,—it is the Lord who commanded light to come out of darkness, who must make you to see Christ; He who takes His rod in His hand to beat down the hard and humble the haughty heart, He must do this also. O if ye felt this power of God, ye would think nothing to forsake all and to follow Him. He has suffered more for us nor we can suffer for Him; and if we suffered anything for Him, He would not suffer any of us yet to be a loser at His hand: but we cannot put Him to a trial.

Now for this unwillingness of these people, it is well expressed here. They are called a people of willingness. And yet He thinks not this satisfactory, to call them a willing people, but He calls them a people of willingness, a noble, generous, high-minded people. And all this is to shew that when the people of God is wakened up in the day of His power, there is none who is able to express their willingness. They are so willing that if they had a thousand minds they would employ them all for Him, and if they had a thousand faces, they would not let one of them look down, but they would hold them all up for the Lord; if every hair in their

head were a man, they would employ them all in His service. Their willingness, indeed, it cannot be expressed. They cry to the Lord, because they think they cannot run fast enough, "Draw me and I sall run after Thee:" they are flying together, as the dowes does to the holes of the rocks before a tempest come. In the Canticles, Christ says, "My soul made Me as the chariots of My noble people;" and, indeed, to see a people running through the land, to meet together to keep communion with the Lord, this is the best chariot that can be. And this willingness has been so great at some times in the children of God that they have fallen in a paroxysm, or like the fit of a fever, with it: as it is Acts xvii. Paul's spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the City of Athens given to so much base idolatry as to worship the UNKNOWN GOD. And Lot, also, he had such a fit as this; he vexed his righteous soul with the iniquities of Sodom, that is, he tortured his soul with their sins, he never saw them committing sin but it was a grief to him. And, indeed, the children of God this while past have been grieved and vexed to behold the sins that has been committed into this same land. I insist upon this the rather because I would wish from my heart that ye would be thus willing, and that ye would be as forward for the glory and honour of God as ever any was. And then, indeed, it should do good to others also, when they should hear tell that the people of St. Andrews were such a willing people. And, indeed, ye have just reason to be willing now.

1. Because it is God's cause ye have in hand, and it is no new cause to us. It is almost sixty years old; it is no less since this same Confession of Faith was first subscribed and sworn to. And it has been still in use yearly to be subscribed and sworn to in some parts, among some in this land, to this day. And I think it would have been so in all the parts of the land if men had dreamed of what was coming upon us. Whatever is added to it at this time, it

is nothing but ane interpretation of the former part; and if men will be willing to see the right, they may see that there is nothing in the latter part but that whilk may be deduced from the first. And in the making of a Covenant we are not bound to keep only these same words that were before, but we must renew it; and in the renewing thereof we must apply it to the present time when it is renewed, as we have done, renewed it against the present ills. For it is not necessar for us to abjure Turkism or Paganism, because we are not in fear to be troubled with that; but the thing that we are in danger of is Papistry, and therefore we must abjure that.

2. A second reason to make you willing is, because this matter concerns you in all things,—in your bodies, in your estates, in your lives, your liberties, in your souls. I may say, if in the Lord's providence this course had not been taken, ye would have found the thraldom whereinto that course, wherein ye were anes (once) going, would have brought you to or (ere) now, even ye who are most averse from it.

3. A third reason to make you willing is, ye have the precedency and testimony of the nobility in the land to it, and of all sorts of persons, noblemen, barons, gentlemen, burgesses, ministers, and commons; and wherefore, then, should not ye be willing to follow their example? And then, I may say, ye have the prayers of all the reformed kirks in Europe for you, who have ever heard of the perturbations that has been, and yet are, into this land. And, moreover, beloved, whom have ye against you in this course? All the atheists, all the papists, and all the profane rogues in the country; they draw to that side, and it is only they who hate this cause. And should not all these make you willing to swear to it, and to hazard for it? And I may say, if ye be but willing to hazard all that ye have, that may be the heaviest distress that ever ye sall be put to. And

if so be that ye had been willing at first, the Lord would have touched the king's heart, and made him willing also; but because he is informed by some that the most part are not willing, that is a great part of the cause why he is not willing.

The second property of God's people is holiness. "In the beauties of holiness;" a speech that is borrowed from the priest's garments under the law. Sometimes they were broidered with gold, sometimes they were all white, especially in the day of expiation. Not that ministers under the New Testament should have such garments as these, for these were representations to them, both of their inward holiness and of their outward holiness, by (beyond) others; but now all believers are priests as well as ministers are, and therefore such garments as these are not necessar. Indeed, if such garments as these had been necessar, then Christ and His apostles had done great wrong to themselves, who never used the like; and they had done great wrong to the kirk also in not appointing such garments to be worn by ministers. There be garments of glory in heaven, and garments of grace in the earth; that party-coloured garmen spoken of in the Colossians, and this holiness whilk is spoken of here. Concerning whilk we will mark two things:—First, as people are a people of willingness in a good cause, so they must also be a people of holiness, or otherwise their willingness is only but for some worldly respects: therefore, I would have you with willingness to put on holiness. And, indeed, if we saw what holiness were, we needed not to be persuaded to put it on, we would do it willingly. For it has three parts in it—1. A purgation from former filthiness. 2. A separation from the world. If thou will be holy, then thou must be separate from the world; thou must strive to keep thyself from those whose garments are spotted with the flesh. 3. Holiness requires devotion or dedication to the Lord. When there is

purgation from filthiness, separation from the world, and dedication to the Lord, there there is holiness and nowhere else.

Now, is there any of you but ye are obleist (obliged) to be holy? Ye say that ye are the people of the Lord. If so be, then ye must have your inward man purged of sin, and ye must stand at the stave's end against the corruptions of the time, and ye must devote yourselves only to serve and honour God. And your Covenant, that ye are to swear to this day, oblishes you to this: and it requires nothing of you but that whilk ye are bound to perform. And, therefore, seeing this is required of you, purge yourselves within, flee the corruptions of the time, eschew the society of those whom ye see to be corrupt, and devote yourselves only to the Lord. Yet this is not that we would obleish you to perform everything punctually that the Lord requires of you; there is none who can do that, but promise to the Lord to do so, tell Him that ye have a desire to do so, and join a resolution and a purpose, and say to Him, Lord, I sall prease (earnestly endeavour) to do als far as I can. And, indeed, there is no more in our covenant but this, that we sall endeavour to keep ourselves within the bounds of our Christian liberty; and, albeit, none of you would swear to this, ye are bound to it by your baptism. And, therefore, think not that we are precisians, (or these who has set down this covenant), seeing all of you are bound to do it.

Secondly, "The *beauties* of holiness." Consider here that as holiness is necessar for the saints of God, so all God's courtiers they are full of beauty. God Himself is full of beauty, and we have no power, beauty nor holiness but in His power, beauty, and holiness. Holiness, it is the beauty of the Son of God, Jesus Christ; and to Him it is said in Esay, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty": and the Holy Ghost has this style to be called Holy. And the angels in heaven, they are clothed with holiness; and the

saints who are in heaven, this is the long white robes wherewith they are clothed. And they who are begun to be sanctified here, they strive to be more and more clad with holiness. Beloved, I would have you to count this to be your beauty, even holiness; for if ye have not this beauty, then all your other beauty will degenerate in a bastard beauty.

Now follows the marvellous *multiplication* of thir people. "From the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." The words are somewhat obscure even to the learned ear, but look to the 133d Psalm, and there ye will see a place to help to clear them. Always (however) observe here, "from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth," that as in a May morning, when there is no extremity of heat, the dew falls so thick that all the fields are covered with it, and it falls in such a secret manner that none sees it fall, so the Lord, in the day of His power, He sall multiply His people, and He sall multiply them in a secret manner; so that it is marvellous to the world, that once there should seem to be so few or none of them, and then incontinent He should make them to be through all estates.

We have first to learn here, that the Kirk of God, she has a morning; and in the morning the dew falls, and not in the night, nor in the heat of the day. So it is not in the night of defection, nor in the heat of the day of persecution, when the Lord's people are multiplied, but it is in the morning of the day. Beloved, I wish you may be a discerning people, to know the Lord's seasons. Sall we be as those, of whom our Saviour complains, who can discern the face of the sky, but cannot discern the day of the Lord's merciful and gracious visitation towards them? Men indeed may be very learned and know things very well, and yet in the meantime be but ignorant of this; for there are sundry gifts bestowed upon men, and ilk ane has not this gift, to discern the Lord's merciful visitation. And there-

fore happy are ye, albeit ye be not great in other gifts, if so be that ye know this; for the Lord, He has some gifts of His own bestowing allanerly (only), whilk He will bestow upon the meanest, and yet He will deny them to the proudest; even as the tops of the mountains, they will be dry and have no dew, while as the valleys will be wet with it. So those who exalts themselves high, and boasts themselves of their other gifts, of their knowledge, learning, experience, &c., the Lord will, for all that, ofttimes leave them void of saving and sanctifying grace.

"From the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." That is, as the dew is multiplied upon the earth, so sall thy people be. This is ane ordinar phrase in Scripture. Hushai says to Absalom, "Convene the people from Dan to Beersheba, and then we sall light upon David as the dew lighteth upon the ground; and then there sall not be left of him and of all the men that are with him so much as one." And this phrase is well set down, Is. liv., "Rejoice, O barren, and thou that didst not bear, break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the married wife." And therefore He uses this form of speech, v. 2, "Enlarge thy tents, and let them stretch the curtains of thy habitations; lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes." And all these things are requisite to be done when the people of God are multiplied thus.

Let us observe here, if the Word of God continue in this land, in the purity thereof, and the sacraments be rightly administrate, the people of God will then multiply exceedingly here. The chiefest city in this land, they are forced to marvel where the people has been in former times that are in it now, so that they cannot get kirks to contain them. And they think, if the gospel continue in the purity thereof, all the kirks that they are building, with the rest, sall have enough ado to contain them. And it is a marvel

to consider how the Lord has multiplied His people, at this time. This is not that we are to glory in multitudes, but to let you see the great work of God, Who has multiplied His people thus. And as it was at the beginning of the plantation of the Christian religion, there was three thousand converted at one preaching of the apostle, I will not say that there has been three thousand converted at a preaching here, but I may say this, that at one preaching there has been some thousands wakened up, who had not been so for a long time before. And will it not be a hard matter, seeing that it is so, that Saint Andrews sall be as Gideon's fleece; that all the kingdom about it sall be wet with the dew of heaven, and it sall only be dry? Even so, will it not be a shame, that all others sall be stirred up, and ye not a whit stirred up in this day more than if there were not such a thing? And, therefore, beloved, I would have you to join yourselves with the rest of the people of God in this cause.

"Thy youth." That is, *thy young men.* Those that are renewed by grace they are called young, albeit they were never so old, because their age is not reckoned by their first, but by their second birth. Ay, moreover, still the older that the children of God grow in years, and the weaker in the world, they grow younger and stronger in grace. Secondly, they are called young, because of the strength that they have to resist temptations. Before they be renewed by grace and born again that way, they are like bairns, that every temptation prevails with them; but then they are as young men, who are able to resist temptations to sin, so that sin gets not liberty to exercise dominion over them. Thirdly, they are called young, because they will contend with all their power and might for the faith. I would have all of you to be young in these respects, and labour to get ane evidence of your new birth by these, that ye are growing in grace, gaining still more strength to resist

temptations, and by contending earnestly for the faith; even be bold in this, especially in contending for the truth. Strive for the truth, for, if ye anes lose it, ye will not get it so easily again. And this same is the covenant of truth whilk ye are to swear to; for as our Covenant is renewed, so also it is exponed (explained) according as the exigencies of the time requires, and it is applied to the present purpose.

Beloved, I told you already that ye have no cause of fear, for I avow and attest here before God, that what ye do is not against authority, but for authority, let some men who are wickedly disposed say what they will; but what ye do is for authority. And I told you of the obligations whereby authority are bound to this. And for the words of it, because they are conceived in a terrible manner, ye need not to stand in awe for this: and it were good that ye should read them over again, and think upon this wrath of God whilk we pray for to come upon us, if we do intend anything against authority.

Objection. We have oblished ourselves by our subscription already; what then needs us to obleish ourselves over again by our oath? *Ans.* It's true, I grant, many of you has subscribed it already, and so ye are bound; but now ye are to swear also, that so through abundance of bands to God ye may know yourselves to be the more bound to Him. David says, I have purposed, I have promised, I have sworn, and I sall perform Thy righteous statutes. There be also here sundry Acts of Parliament, that are all of them made within this same kingdom for the maintainance of the true religion; and for thir, they speak for themselves. And I would have these who say we do anything against law and against our superiors, to see and try if there be anything against them, and not all directly for them.

Beloved, I hope that it will not be necessar for us to spend mickle time with you in removing of scruples. Good

things I know has over many objections against them from the devil, the world, and our own ill hearts. And I know some of them who are accounted the learnedst in the land, have assayed their wits and used their pens to object against this. But truly these who are judicious, they have confessed that they have been greatly confirmed by that whilk they have objected; and the reason of it was, because they who were the most learned assayed themselves to see what they could say, and yet when all was done, they had nothing to say that was worth the hearing.

For the first part of this Confession of faith, there is not a word changed in it; and if so be that men had keeped that part of it free of sinistrous glosses, and had applied it according to the meaning of those who were the penners thereof, there needed not to have such a thing ado as there is now; but because they have put sinistrous glosses upon it now and misapplied it, therefore it behoved to be explained and applied to the present time.

The first thing that ye swear to is, That with your whole hearts ye agree and resolve, all the days of your life, constantly to adhere unto and defend the true religion. There is no scruple here. 2. That ye suspend and forbear the practice of all novations already introduced in the matters of the worship of God, or approbation of the corruptions of the public government of the kirk, or civil places and power of kirkmen, till they be tried and allowed in free assemblies and in parliaments. Now, I know there be some who make scruples here. How can we, say they, bind ourselves to forbear the practice of that whilk Acts of Assembly allows, and Acts of Parliament commands? *Ans* We do not herein condemn the Act as altogether unlawful, whatever our judgment be of it, but this is all what we do. Because such ills has followed upon these novations, therefore we think it meet now to forbear the practice of them till they be tried by Assembly and Parliament.

And this is not a breach of the Act, when all is done. Because the Act is not set down in the manner of a command, but only as a counsel; for so the Act of the pretended Assembly bears. The words is, "The Assemblie thinks good," &c., "because all memory of superstition is now past, therefore we may kneel at the communion." Then, if there be any danger of superstition, by the very words of the Act we may gather this, that we should not kneel: and so they who practice now keep the letter of the Act, but they who forbear keep the meaning thereof more nearly than the practisers. 3. We promise and swear against the Service-book, Book of Canons, and High Commission, with all other innovations and ills contained in our Supplications, Complaints, and Protestations. Now for the Service-book, I find every one almost to be so inclined willingly to quite (be done with) it. But let me attest your own consciences, if it had gone on for a while, and been read among you, as it was begun to be, if it had not been as hard for you to have quat it as to quit the Articles of Perth; and therefore, do not deceive yourselves, to let such things be practised any more. It is a pitiful thing, that those who are wise otherways should deceive themselves in the matters of God's service and worship, and suffer others to deceive them also. 4. Ye promise and swear, to the uttermost of your power to stand to the defence of the king's majesty, in the defence and preservation of true religion: as also, every one of you to the mutual defence of another in the same cause. Now there be a number who says, that in this we come under rebellion against the king, and we join in a combination against him, when we join ourselves thus, every one for the defence of another. I say no more of it but this. It is not disputed here, ye see, whether it be lawful for subjects to take up arms against their prince or not, whether in offence or defence: but that we will maintain the true religion, and

resist all contrary corruptions, according to our vocation. And every one of us oblishes ourselves for the defence of another, only in maintaining the cause of true religion, according to the laws and liberties of this kingdom. And indeed, this is very reasonable to be done, albeit not asked of; for when your neighbour's house is burning, ye will not run to the king to speir (ask) if ye should help him or not, before it come to your own; but ye will incontinent put to your hand, both to help him, and to save your own house. Ye may not say, neither, that because we may not oppose against authority, that we may not oppose against Papists or against Prelates; for that were to make ourselves slaves to men. And the very law of nature binds every one of us to help another, in a lawful manner, for a good cause. 5. Ye swear, because ye cannot look for a blessing from God upon your proceedings, except that with your confession and subscription ye join such a life as becomes Christians who has renewed their covenant with God,—therefore ye promise to endeavour at least, for yourselves and all that are under you, to keep yourselves within the bounds of your Christian liberty, and to be good ensamples to others in all godliness, soberness, and righteousness, and of every duty we owe both to God and man. And there is none who needs to skarre (be frightened) at this; for we are not hereby to tie any to the obedience of the law, but to the obedience of the Gospel: and I am sure all are bound at least to please to (strive after) this. And therefore I would have you to labour to it; and when ye find that ye cannot get it done, then run to Christ, and beseech Him to teach you to do it; and to give you strength, according to His promise made in His new covenant; and so ye sall give glory to God and get good to your own souls. And, indeed, all of you are obleist to amend your lives, and to live otherwise than ye have done. And last of all, there is the *Attestation*.

Now, I hope all these things be so clear to you, that there

is not any scruple in any of your minds. And therefore, that this work may be done aright, and may be accompanied by the power of God, I would have all of you to bow your knees before that great and dreadful Lord, and beseech Him that He would send down the Holy Ghost, and the power of His Spirit, to accompany the work, that so ye may do it with all your hearts, to His glory and honour, and to your comfort in Jesus Christ.

THE NATIONAL COVENANT:

EXHORTATION AT INVERNESS.

*BY ANDREW CANT.**

LONG ago our gracious God was pleased to visit this nation with the light of His glorious Gospel, by planting a vineyard in, and making His glory to arise upon Scotland. A wonder! that so great a God should shine on so base a soil! Nature hath been a stepmother to us in comparison of those who live under a hotter climate, as in a land like Goshen, or a garden like Eden. But the Lord looks not as man: His grace is most free, whereby it often pleaseth Him to compense what is wanting in nature: whence upon Scotland (a dark obscure island, inferior to many) the Lord did arise, and discovered the tops of the mountains with such a clear light, that in God's gracious dispensation, it is inferior to none. How far other nations outstripped her in naturals, as far did she out-go them in spirituals. Her pomp less, her purity more: they had more of antichrist than she, she more of Christ than they: in their reformation something of the beast was reserved; in ours, not so much as a hoof. When the Lord's ark was set up among them, Dagon fell,

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*The author of this "Discourse and Exhortation" and of the two Sermons that follow, was ordained minister of Pitsligo, and in 1664 was inducted to St. Nicholas' Church, Aberdeen. Part of the inscription on his tombstone is, "A Boanerges and Barnabas: a Magnet and Adamant." He was a member of the Assembly at Glasgow, 1638. This Exhortation was at the renewing of the National Covenant at Inverness, 25th April, 1638.

and his neck brake, yet his stump was left; but with us, stump and all was cast into the brook Kidron. Hence king James his doxology in face of parliament, thanking God who made him king in such a kirk that was far beyond England (they having but an ill-said mass in English) yea, beyond Geneva itself; for holy-days (one of the beast's marks) are in part there retained, which (said he) to day are with us quite abolished. Thus to a people sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death, light is sprung up. Thus, in a manner, the stone that the builders refused is become the head of the corner. The Lord's Anointed (to whom the ends of the earth were given for a possession and inheritance) came and took up house amongst us, strongly established on two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, and well ordered with the staves of beauty and bands, and borrowing nothing from the border of Rome. Her foundation, walls, doors, and windows were all adorned with carbuncles, sapphires, emeralds, chrysolites, and precious stones out of the Lord's own treasure. God Himself sat with His beauty and ornaments therein, so that it was the praise and admiration of the whole earth. Strangers and home-bred persons wondered. Such was the glory, perfection, order, and unity of this house, that the altar of Damascus could have no peace, the Canaanite no rest, heresy no hatching, schism no footing, Diotrephes no incoming, the papists no couching, and Jezebel no fairding. Our church looked forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Then God's tabernacle was amiable, His glory filled the sanctuary, the clear fresh streams watered the city of our God; the stoutest humbled themselves, and were afraid. If an idiot entered the Lord's courts, so great power sounded from Barnabas and Boanerges, the sons of consolation and thunder, that they were forced to fall down on their face, and cry, "This is Bethel, God is here."

But alas! Satan envied our happiness, brake our ranks,

poisoned our fountains, mudded and defiled our streams; and while the watchmen slept, the wicked one sowed his tares: whence these divers years by-gone, for ministerial authority, we had lordly supremacy and pomp; for beauty, fairding; for simplicity, whorish buskings; for sincerity, mixtures; for zeal, a Laodicean temper; for doctrines, men's precepts; for wholesome fruits, a medley of rites; for feeders we had fleecers; for pastors, wolves and impostors; for builders of Jerusalem, rebuilders of Jericho; for unity, rents; for progress, defection. Truth is fallen in the streets, our dignity is gone, our credit lost, our crown is fallen from our heads; our reputation is turned to imputation: before God and man we justly deserve the censure of the degenerate vine; a backsliding people, an apostate perjured nation, by our breaking a blessed covenant so solemnly sworn.

Yet, behold! when this should have been our doom, when all was almost gone, when we were down the hill, when the pit's mouth was opened, and we were at the falling in, and at the very shaking hands with Rome; the Lord, strong and gracious, pitied us, looked on us, and cried, saying, "Return, return, ye backsliding people; come, and I will heal your backslidings." The Lord hath been so saving, and the cry so quickening, that almost all of all ranks, from all quarters and corners, are awakened and on foot, meeting and answering the Lord, saying, "Behold we come unto Thee, for Thou art the Lord our God, other lords besides Thee have had dominion over us, but by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name." All are wondering at the turn, and looking like them that dream, and are singing and saying, "Blessed be the Lord who hath not given us for a prey to their teeth; our souls are escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler, the snare is broken, and we are escaped: our help is in the name of the Lord who made the heaven and the earth." Who thought to

have seen such a sudden change in Scotland, when all second causes were posting a contrary course? when proud men were boasting and saying, "Bow down that we may go over;" and we laid our "bodies as the ground, and as the streets to them that went over." But now, behold one of God's wonders! So many of all ranks taking the honour and cause of Christ to heart; all unanimously, harmoniously and legally conjoined as one man in supplications, protestations and declarations against innovations and innovators, corruptions and corrupters. Behold and wonder! That old covenant (once and again solemnly sworn and perfidiously violated) is now again happily renewed, with such solemnity, harmony, oaths and subscriptions, that I dare say, this hath been more real and true in thee, O Scotland, these few weeks by-gone, than for the space of thirty years before. I know Pashurs that went to smite Jeremiahs, are become at this work Magor-missabib, terror round about; Zedekiahs that went to smite Micaiahs, seek now an inner chamber to hide themselves. Tobiah and Sanballat gnaw their tongues, laugh and despise us, saying, "What is this ye do? Will ye rebel against the king? Will ye fortify yourselves? Will ye make an end in a day? Will ye remove the stones out of the heaps of rubbish that is burnt?" Rehum the chancellor, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions, cease not to fill the ears of a gracious prince with prejudice, saying, "Be it known to thee, O king, if this city be built, and the walls thereof set up again, that they will not pay toll, tribute or custom." But to these we answer, "Let the king live, and let all his enemies be confounded, let all that seek his damnation be put to shame here and henceforth: but as for you, ye are strangers, meddle not with the joy of God's people; ye have no portion, right, nor memorial in God's Jerusalem." If the begun work vex them, it is no wonder; it does prognosticate the ruin of their kingdom, and that Haman,

who hath begun to fall before the seed of the Jews, shall fall totally: the Lord is about to prune His vineyard, and to drive out the foxes that eat the tender grapes; to pluck up bastard plants, and to whip buyers and sellers out of the temple. The Lord is about to strike the Gehazis with leprosy, and to bring low the Simon Maguses who were so high lifted up by Satan's ministry. The Lord is calling the great ones to put too their shoulder, and help His work; He hath been in the south, saying, "Keep not back," and blessed be God, they have not. He hath now sent to the north, saying, "Give up, bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth:" contend for the faith once delivered to Scotland.

There is one Lord, one faith, one cause that concerns all. Though this north climate be cold, I hope your hearts are not, at least they should not be. The earth is the Lord's and its fulness, the world and they that dwell therein; the uttermost parts of the earth are given to Christ for a possession; His dominion is from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. Come then, and kiss the Son; count it your greatest honour to honour Christ, and to lend His fallen truths a lift; come and help to build the old wastes, that ye may be called the repairers of the breach; and then shall all generations call you blessed; then shall God build up your houses, as He did to the Egyptian midwives, for their fearing God, and for their friendship to His people Israel. Be not like the nobles of Tekoa, of whom Nehemiah complained, that they would not put their necks to the work of the Lord. Be not like Meroz, whom the angel of the Lord cursed bitterly, for not coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Neither be ye like these mockers and scorners, at the renewing of the Lord's covenant in Hezekiah's days, but rather like those whose hearts the Lord humbled and moved. Be not like those invited to the king's supper,

who refused to come, and had miserable excuses, and therefore should not taste of it. We hope better things of you; God hath reserved and advanced you for a better time and use: but if ye draw back, keep silence, and hold your peace, God shall bring deliverance and enlargement to His church another way: but God save you from the sequel. Nothing is craved of you but what is for God and the king; for Christ's honour, and the kirk's good, and the kingdom's peace. God give to your hearts courage, wisdom and resolution for God and the king, and for Christ and His truths. *Amen*

THE NATIONAL COVENANT.

SERMON AT GLASGOW.*

BY ANDREW CANT.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, who made a marriage for his son: and he sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; and they would not come," etc.—*Matt.* xxii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

I PURPOSE not to handle this parable punctually, because it stands not with the nature of a parable, neither will the time suffer me so to do.

The parable runs upon an evident declaration and clear manifestation of God's sweetest mercies, in offering the marriage of His Son, His own Son, His well-beloved Son, the Son of His love, the Son of His bosom, the Son as good as the Father, the Son as great and as glorious as the Father, the Son whose generation none can declare. The Father offers this His Son in marriage: 1. To the Jews, as you have in the first seven verses of the parable. 2. To the Gentiles, in the rest of the parable.

1. To the Jews, not because of their worthiness; "But even so, O Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight." This offer was the effect of no merit, neither of congruity nor of condignity in the Jews; for they were like that wretched and menstruous infant, Ezek. xvi. 3, 4, unswaddled, unwashen,

* This sermon was delivered in 1638, immediately after the Renovation of the National Covenant and Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

uncleansed, "lying in its blood, its navel not cut, nor salted at all, nor swaddled at all, cast out in the open field, having no eye to pity it."

2. As for the Gentiles, ye may see what case they were in, if ye read this same parable, Luke xiv. 20. "Go ye out into the streets and lanes of the city, and call the poor, the lame, blind and maimed," etc. Some were cripple, some poor and blind, and withered, and miserable, and naked, and leper, unworthy to come to our Lord's gates, let be to have them opened wide to us; unworthy to be set down at His table, let be to be admitted to His royal marriage feast, and to get Christ our Lord to be our match, and to be the food and cheer of our souls: and therefore let all souls, let all pulpits, let all schools, let all universities, let all men, let all women, let all Christians cry, grace, grace, grace, praise, praise, praise, blessing, blessing, for evermore to the Lord's free grace. Fy, fy, upon the man; fy, fy, upon the woman, that is an enemy to the Lord's free grace. The fullest, and the fairest, and the freest thing in heaven or earth is the free grace of God, to our poor souls: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory."

At another occasion I handled the parable after a more general manner, and propounded these points unto you: 1. Who was this great king? 2. Who was the Son of this great king?

1. This great King is God Himself, "the King of kings, and Lord of lords." Then for the Lord's sake, stand in awe of Him, love Him and fear Him. And I charge you all here before that great and dreadful Lord, that ye humble yourselves under His mighty hand, and that ye prostrate and submit yourselves under His almighty hand, and come away as ye promised. Kiss the Son, and embrace Him, and then shall wrath be holden off you; and a shower of God's mercy shall come down upon you. Then the King is God.

2. The King's Son is Christ. Then there follows a dinner, "I have prepared my dinner." Yea, I have a supper also, for Luke says, He "prepared a great supper." I told you in what respects it is great. 1. I told you it was great in respect of the author of it, God. 2. I told you it was great in respect of the matter of it. Ye know the matter of it, as holy Scripture tells. Whiles it gets base, silly, simple names, and is delineated and expressed under common terms: but the most common term it gets is so considerable that our case would not be good if it were wanting. Whiles 'tis called "a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined." Whiles it is called "gold." Whiles it is called "fatlings, and a fatted and fed calf." Whiles 'tis "honey and milk." Whiles it is called "oil and wine." Whiles it is called the "bread of life." In a word, to tell you what this feast is, it is this Christ and all His saving graces freely given to thy soul. Then, 3. It is great in respect of the manner of its preparation: I confess, this feast, though prepared in silver, is often administered in earthen vessels, and clay dishes: and, though it be mingled with butter and honey, yet this makes the natural man, when he looks upon it, not to think much of it, because he looks on the outside of it only. But would to God your eyes were opened to see the inside of it, and not to be like proud Naaman, who said, "What better is this water of Jordan than the water of Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus?" As some say, What better is this feast than the feast we have at home? As the man of God prayed for his servant, "Lord, open his eyes that he may see;" and the Lord opened his eyes, and he saw another sight, even the mountain full of horses and flaming chariots of fire; so, I pray the Lord open all your eyes, that ye may see the many differences between this feast and all other feasts; for other feasts are but feasts for the body, and they are but feasts for the belly; an Esau may have them, a reprobate may feed upon them. These

are nothing else but the swine's husks, whereon the prodigal fed for a time, and scarce could get them; but when he came back again to his father's house, then he fed upon the fatted calf; and then he got a feast, and then was there plenty, then did his well run over, then was his cup to the brim, and over-flowing. O that ye knew your Father's house, and the fatness, the fulness, the feast, and the plenty that are there, ye would all hunger after it, and would then say, alas! I have been feeding on husks too long, "now will I arise and go to my father's house, where there is bread enough." All the Lord's steps drop plenty and fatness. 4. I told you that this supper is a great feast in respect of the great number that are called unto it. The poorest thing in all the land is called unto it: the Jews are called, the Gentiles are called, yea the poorest thing that is hearing me is called; such as a great man would not look on, but he would close the gates on such an one: a great man would not deign himself to look on them in his kitchen: yet come ye away to this feast, the King of kings has His house open, and His gates patent, He has a ready feast, and a room house, and fair open gates, and every body shall be welcome that will come. "Whosoever thirsts; let him come, and take of the water of life freely." And now through all the nooks and corners of this kingdom of Scotland, Christ is sending out His servants, and I am sent out unto you this day, crying unto you, "Come away, His oxen and fatlings are killed, His wine is drawn, and His table furnished, and all things ready." 5. I told you it was a great feast, in respect of the place where it is kept. There are two dining-rooms:—(1) A dining-room above. (2) A dining-room below. A dining-room above, that is a high dining-room, that is a fair house, that is a trim place. O the rivers of the Lord's consolations that run there: I confess, in this lower dining-room of the church, the waters come first to the ankles, then to the mid-leg,

then to the knees, then to the thigh, and then past wading; but then shall ye get fulness, when ye come up to that dining-room. And when ye come there, there shall be no more hunger, no more thirst, there shall be no more scant nor want, nor any more sour sauce in your feasts, neither any more sadness, nor sorrowful days: but eat your fill, and drink your fill. And many shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down at the royal and rare covered table, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and get their fill to their hungered—"When I awake (says David) I shall be filled with Thy likeness." Poor soul, thou canst never get thy fill; I wish to God thou got a sop and a drop to set thee by till then. Indeed, if thou hadst a vessel, thou shouldst get thy fair fill even in this life. And I dare say, if thou wouldst seek, and seek on, and seek instantly, the Lord would one day or other make thee drink of the new wine of the gospel; He would give thee a draught, a fair draught, a fill, a fair fill of the wine of His consolation, He would make you suck the milk at the breasts of His consolation; but He will aye keep the best wine hindmost, as He did at the marriage of Cana. Therefore, poor thing, lift up thy head, and gather thy heart; ere it be long thou shalt get a draught of the best wine in thy Father's house, where there are many mansions, and many dwelling-places. "I go (says Christ) to prepare a place for you:" and He will come again, and receive you to Himself, where ye shall drink abundantly of the new wine of the gospel. *Lastly*, This supper is a great one in respect of the continuance of it; it lasts not for one day, but for ever; it lasts not for a hundred and four-score days, but for ever, and evermore. Poor thing, who possibly gets some blyth morning blinks in upon thy soul, and possibly gets a taste of this cup in the morning, and long ere even thou art hungering and thirsting again, and thou wots not where to meet thy Lord, and all the thing thou

hast gotten is forgotten; in the day that He shall come, then thou shalt feast constantly and continually in thy Father's house, where thou shalt never want thy arms full, thou shalt never want thy Lord out of thy sight, neither shall thy Lord ever want thee, but He shall ever be with thee, and thou with Him; thou shalt follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes.

"Behold I have prepared my dinner." All this feast was for a marriage; and here is a wonder, a world's wonder, a behold, which notes divers things: 1. Behold it for an admiration. 2. Behold it for an excitation. 3. Behold it for consolation. 4. Behold it for instruction. Behold, and be awakened; behold, and be excited; behold, and be comforted; behold, and admire; behold, and wonder, that the King of heaven's Son will marry your soul! Then behold, and come away to your own marriage; behold, lost man shall get a Saviour, behold, the King's Son will be a Saviour to a slave; behold, the King's Son will drink the potion, and the sick shall get health; behold, the King's Son will marry Himself upon thee! "I will marry thee unto Me in faith and in righteousness." "Thou that was a widow and reproached," like a poor widow that has many foes, but few friends; yet, says the Lord, "Thou shalt not remember the reproach of thy widow-hood any more." Then behold, and come away to the marriage. Now, "Who are these that are invited to the marriage?" I told you, 1. The Jews are invited. 2. The Gentiles are invited; yea, you are invited; I thank the bridegroom you are invited; I shall bear witness of it, when I am gone from you, you are invited. And I thank the Lord, I have more to bear witness of; yea, that which comforts my soul, by all appearance the greatest part of you are come in, and by all good appearance ye have the wedding garment. I hope God has a people among you: this I shall bear witness of, when I am gone from among you; the greatest part has lent an ear;

the Lord bear it in upon your hearts with His own blessed preference.

1. "He sent His servants forth." He gives many a cry Himself, and many a shout Himself. Is not that one of God's cries, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and laden, and I will ease you." O but that is a sweet word, thou art a weary thing, with a sore load of sin upon the neck of thy soul, and thou art like to sink under it, and art crying, what will come of thee? He is bidding thee come away, and get a drink of the marriage-wine to cheer thy fainting spirit; and if thou be weary, He shall ease thee.

Object. Alas! Sin hinders me, that I cannot come; sin is so black and ugly upon me, and so heavy, that I cannot come. *Ans.* "Come (says the Lord) I will reason with you," that is, I will have your faults discovered, and I will have you convicted of your faults; but when I have reasoned with you, will I cast you away? Nay, but though your sins were red as "crimson, they shall be made white as snow or wool."

Object. 2. Alas! but my sins are many, how can the Lord look upon me or pardon me? *Ans.* "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for He will abundantly pardon; for My ways are not your ways, neither My thoughts your thoughts; but as the heaven is high above the earth, so are My thoughts, (in pardoning) higher nor yours" (in sinning). Come away, poor thing, then, and get thy heart full of mercy; and because such a fair offer is hard to be laid hold on, therefore He goes to the market-cross, like an herald with a great O yes, that all men there may be awakened. It is not little that will awaken sleeping sinners, therefore He puts too an O yes. "Ho, come every one that thirsteth, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Why do ye spend

your money for nought?" Ye have spent your strength too long in vain; ye have been feeding on husks too long; ye have forsaken mercy and embraced vanity too long. Come away, and He "will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

2. "He sent forth His servants." This is a great wonder, that He calls on His servants, and sends them to them: this is wonderful! He stood not on compliments, who should be first in the play: ye would never have sought Him, if He had not sought you; ye would never have loved Him, if He had not loved you with the love of Christ. I would say a comfortable word to a poor soul: is there any soul in this house this day, that has chosen the Lord for the love and delight of his soul? Thou wouldst never have chosen Him, if that loving and gracious God had not chosen thee. Is there any soul in this house this day, that is filled with the love of Christ? Thou wouldst never have loved Him if He had not loved thee first. Is there any soul that is seeking unto Him in earnest? Be comforted, He is seeking thee, and hast found thee, and gart thee seek Him. I might produce scripture for all these, but the points are plain.

3. Lo, a greater wonder! "He sent forth His servants." Ye would think, if any had wronged you, it were their part to seek you, and not yours to seek them; or if any baser than another had done a wrong, it beseemed him to be the most careful to take pains, and seek to him whom he had wronged. But behold here a wonder! The great God seeking base man! the offended God seeking offending man! And is this because He has need of you? Nay, canst thou be a party for Him? Canst thou hold the field against Him? Nay, "Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?" Shall the crawling worm and the pickle of small dust fight against the King of kings? Art thou able to stand out against

Him, or pitch any field against Him? Nay, I tell thee, O man, there is not a pickle of hair in thy head, but if God arise in anger, He can cause it seem a devil unto thee, and every nail of thy fingers, to be a torment of hell against thee. O Lord of hosts, and King of kings, who can stand out against Thee? And yet thou hast offended Him, and run away from Him, and miskent Him, and transgressed all His commandments, and hell, and wrath, and judgment is thy portion which thou deservest, and yet the Lord is sending out His servants, to see if they can make an agreement. Then, for God's sake, think on this wonder: for all this text is full of wonders, all God's works are indeed full of wonders, but this is the wonder of wonders. We then are God's ambassadors, I beseech you to be reconciled to God. Should not ye have sought unto Him first, with ropes about your necks, with sackcloth upon your loins, and with tears in your eyes? Should not ye have lain at His door, and scraped, if ye could not knock? And yet the Lord hath sent me to you, and our faithful men about here, crying, Come away to the marriage: Come away, I will renew My contract with you; I will not give you a bill of divorcement, but I will give My Son to you; and your souls that are black and blae, I will make them beautiful. Behold yet another wonder! When He has sent out other servants, and they got a nay-say; yet He will not take a nay-say. Ye know a good neighbour, when he has prepared a dinner for another of his neighbours, sends out his servants, intimating that all things are ready, the table is covered, and dishes set on; if once warned, he refuses, he might well send once or twice to him, but at last he would take a displeasure, and not send again: but behold a wonder! He sends out His servants, in the plural number. But behold a great wonder! After one servant is abused, He sends out others, and when they are slain, and spitefully used by these who should have followed their call, and

come in; what does the Lord? Read the chapter before, and ye shall see a great wonder; "He sent out His own Son:" when Moses cannot do it, when the prophets cannot do it, when John the Baptist cannot do it; well, says the Lord, I will see if My Son can do it: I have not a Son but one, and that is the Son of My love, and I will make Him a man, and send Him down among them, and see how they will treat Him: and when He comes, they cry out, "There is the heir, let us kill him." But behold a greater wonder! That after these servants are abused, and spitefully handled; and after the Son Himself is come, and has drunken of the same cup, after He has died a shameful death, and after they had put their hands on the heir; yet, when all is done, the Lord sends servants upon servants, preachers upon preachers, apostles upon apostles to call in the people of the Jews, to see if they will marry His Son. Then behold and wonder at all these wonders! and let all knees bow down before God. Lord stamp your hearts with this word of God: God grant you could be kind to Him, as He has been kind to you, and testified the same, by putting salve to your soul, and bringing it into the wedding.

"He sent forth His servants." We may learn from this, that we who are the brethren in the ministry must be servants, and not lords. I wish at my heart, that we knew what we are, and that we knew our calling, and what we have gotten in trust: for we serve the best Master in the world; but I'll tell you He is the strictest Master that can be. I'll tell thee, O minister, and I speak it to thee with reverence, and I speak it to myself, There is a day coming, when thou must answer to God for what thou has got in charge, thou must answer to God for all the talents thou hast got, whether ten or two; for all have not got alike. But, dear brethren, happy is the man, if he had but one talent, that puts it out for his Lord's use; and Lord be

thanked, that He will seek no more of me than He has given me. There are many things to discourage a faithful minister; but yet this may encourage us, that we serve the best Master, and that is a sure recompence of reward that is abiding us. Indeed He has not sent us out to seek ourselves, or to get gain to ourselves, He has not sent us out to woo a bride to ourselves, or to woo home the lord to our own bosom only: but He has sent us to woo a bride, and to deck and trim a spouse for our Lord and Master. And ye that are ministers of Glasgow ye shall all be challenged upon this: whether or not ye have laboured to woo and trim a bride for your Lord: but I know that you will be careful to present your flocks as a chaste spouse to Him. And we also that are ministers in landwart, we are sent out for this errand, it matters not what part of the world we be in, if we do our Master's service; and the day is coming when thou must answer to God for thy parish, whether thou hast laboured to present it as a chaste spouse to Christ. It may gar the soul of the faithful minister leap for joy, when he remembers the day of His Majesty's faithful meeting and his, when he shall give up his accounts, and then it shall be seen who has employed his talent well: then shall He say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into thy Master's joy." Or rather "Let thy Master's joy enter into thee, and take and fill thy soul with it." Many a sad heart has a faithful watchman; but there is a day coming when he shall get a joyful heart. But for whom especially is this joy reserved? It is even for those "who convert many to righteousness; they shall shine like the stars in the firmament, in the kingdom of their Father." It is plain this belongs not to thee, O faithless watchman. What hast thou been doing? Busking a bride for thyself? Busking a bride for the Pope of Rome, the bishop of Rome, even for antichrist? becking and bingeing

to this table and that altar, bringing in the tapistry of anti-christian hangings, and endeavouring to set the crown on another man's head, nor Christ's? But thou that wilt not set on the crown on His head, and labour to hold it on, thou O preacher, the vengeance of God shall come upon thee, the blood of souls shall be upon thee. Many a kirk-man eats blood, and drinks blood: Lord deliver our souls from blood-guiltiness. Dear brethren, let us repent, let us repent: I trow we have been all in the wrong to the Bride-groom; shame shall be upon thee that thinks shame to repent. I charge you all, before the timber and stones of this house, and before that same day-light that ye behold, and that under no less pain nor the loss of the salvation of your souls, that ye wrong not the Bridegroom nor his bride any more. But we come to our point:

We are servants and not lords. I see never a word in this text, nay, nor in all the scripture that the Master of the feast sent out lords to woo home his bride; He "sent out His servants," but not His lords. Read all the Bible from the beginning to the ending, you shall not find it. Daft men may dispute, and by respect may carry it away; but read all the Old and New Testament both, and let me see if ever this lord prelate, or that lord bishop, was sent to woo home his bride.

Object. 1. We have our prerogative from Aaron, from Moses, from the apostles, from Timothy. *Ans.* I trow ye be like bastard bairns that can find no father. So they shall never be able to get a father, for man has set them up, and man is their father.

Object. 2. Find we not the name of bishop under the New Testament? *Ans.* Yes: but not the bishop of a diocese, such as my Lord Glasgow, and my Lord St. Andrew's; but we find a pastor or a bishop over a flock. It is a wonderful matter to me, that men should think to reason this way; for in the Old Testament there

is not an office, nor an office-bearer, but is distinctly determined in the making of the tabernacle; there is not a tackle, nor the quantity of it, not a curtain, nor the colour thereof, not a snuffer, nor a candlestick, nor a besom that sweeps away the filth, nor an ash-pan that keepeth the ashes, but all are particularly set down; yet, ye will not get a bishop, nor an archbishop, nor this metropolitan, nor that great and cathedral man, no not within all the Bible. The Lord pity them; for indeed I think them objects of pity, rather than of malice. Christ is a perfect king, and a perfect prophet. Thou canst never own Him to be a perfect priest and king, that denies Him to be perfect prophet; and a perfect prophet He can never be, except He has set down all the offices and office-bearers requisite for the government of His house; but so has He done, therefore is He perfect.

Obj. 3. But they will call themselves servants. *Ans.* 1. The fox may catch a while the sheep, and the Pope may call himself *servus servorum*, the servant of servants: and they will call themselves brethren, when they write to us; but they will take it very highly and hardly, if we call them brethren, when we write back to them again: but men shall be known by their fruits, and by their works, to be what they are, and not what they call themselves. But if they will be called servants and yet remain lords, let them take heed that they be not such servants, as cursed Canaan was, "a servant of servants shall he be." Take heed that they be not serving men's wrath and vengeance, and not servants "by the grace of God, and by the mercy of God," as they style themselves. 2. Let them take heed that they be not such servants as Gehazi was; he was a false servant, he ran away after the courtier Naaman, seeking gifts, and said his master sent him, when (God knows) his master sent him not; at the time he should have been praying to the Lord, to help his poor kirk and comfort her: the curse and

vengeance of God came upon him, and he was stricken with leprosy for his pains; such servants are these men who now sit down on their cathedral nests, labouring to make themselves great like Gehazi: let them take heed that their hinder end be not like his. 3. Let them take heed that they be not such servants as Ziba was to Mephibosheth, who not only took away what was his by right, but also went to the king with ill tales of poor cripple Mephibosheth: such servants are these who not only rob the church of her privileges and liberties, but also run up to the king with lies and ill tales of poor Mephibosheth, the cripple kirk of Scotland. 4. Let them take heed that they be not such servants as Judas was, an evil servant indeed: he sold his Master for gain, as ill servants do. Or like these that strike the bairns when they are not doing any fault: and they are ill servants who busk their master's spouse with antichrist's busking. Wo unto them, and the man who is the head of their kirk, whose cross and trumpery they would put on the Lord's chaste spouse. But if they will call themselves servants, and yet remain lords, let them take heed that they be not of this category that I have reckoned up. The Lord make us faithful servants, and the Lord rid His house of them.

Time will not suffer me to go through the rest of the text, only I will take a glance of some things which make for your use at this time.

Quest. How are their servants treated? *Ans.* Some of them get *nolumus* upon the back of their bill: some of them are beaten, and spitefully used and slain. Dear hearts, know ye not how Moses was used? how Aaron and Jeremiah, &c., were used? how Zechariah was slain between the porch and the altar? how Jeremiah was smitten; and he that did it, got his name changed into Magor Missabib, *terror round about?* Know ye not that Zedekiah struck Micaiah; and how his threatenings against

him came to pass? Always we may learn from this, that the Lord's best servants have been, and will be abused, and spitefully used? This is a great sin lying upon Scotland, England and Ireland. Many faithful servants in the three kingdoms have been spitefully used; their cheeks burnt, their noses ript up, their faces marked; some of them put into a stinking prison, where they had not an hour's health, and many of them rugged from their flocks, and their flocks from them. Look over to the kingdom of Ireland, the many desolate congregations that are there; many a dear one there, that would have had a blyth soul, to have had your last Sunday, or seen it, or to have assurance of such a day before they come into Heaven. Pray for the peace of Zion, and pity those poor things who would be content to go from one sea-bank to the other, to be in your place to-day. And truly the blood of these poor things is crying for vengeance to light where it should light; for the blame lies upon none but the proud prelates. If I would pose you with this question, as you will answer to God, Who have been the instruments of all this mischief? I am sure the most ignorant among you can answer, None but the proud beasts the prelates. The Lord give them repentance.

I know not how you have handled your pastors in this town, because I am but a stranger; but trow ye that two silly men that came among you can do any thing, if your own pastors had not laid the foundations: but, for God's sake, honour and respect your pastors, I mean those of them that keep the covenant of Levi. And ye that have broken it, and will not come to renew it again, shame and dishonour will be upon you for evermore. I have my message from the 2nd of Malachi, "I will pour contempt upon them who have broken the covenant of Levi." Therefore let pastors and people enter both within this covenant; for it is the sweetest thing in the world, to see pastors and a people going one way. Therefore come away all of you unto the wedding, come

and subscribe the contract, put your heart and hand to it. Blessed be God for what already ye have done.

Some of the servants got a nay-say, and some of them were beaten; hence we learn, that every minister will not be beaten, nor will get the stroke to keep; but if a minister get a nay-say, it will make him as sad as if he had gotten sore strokes. If a minister get a nay-say that has been travailing these many years in the ministry, and yet cannot get one soul brought unto the Lord, that will make him as sad as sore strokes will do. When an honest minister has laboured many years painfully in the sweat of his brows, and has never had another tune, but, Come away, come away unto the marriage; and when he walks among them, and sees never one coming in, nor never one that has on the wedding garment, what will be the complaint of the poor man? O then he will cry out with Isaiah, "Lord, who believes my report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been made naked? Lord, I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought." What will come of me, after so many years' travail in the ministry? I have not brought forth one child. The Lord forbid that ye our people break your ministers' hearts. And as for you, brethren, be more watchful over your flocks, be more busy in catechising and exhorting them. And urge the duty of the covenant upon them, and when they are on foot, hold them going: lead them to the fountain and cock-eye. Lead them to the well-spring: and make meikle of them; feed the Lord's lambs, as Christ said to Peter, "If thou lovest Me, feed My sheep: lovest thou Me? I say, feed My sheep." Minister, lovest thou me? feed my bais'd sheep: lovest thou me? feed my lambs. You must be feeders, and not fleecers; pastors, but not wolves; builders, but not destroyers; and come away, and help up the broken-down wall of Jerusalem. For if one of you can bring timber here, another bring mortar, a third bring stones, and make up a slap in Zion;

and I hope we that came here shall go home with blyth news to our congregations, that we cannot say we have got a cold welcome; so I hope ye will think it your greatest comfort, and your greatest credit also. Venture in covenant with God, and whosoever thou be, that wilt not enter in covenant, we will have thy name, and we will pour out our complaints before God for thee; for we that are ministers must be faithful to our Master; and I take you all to witness, that we have discharged our commission faithfully; and I hope the blessing of the Lord shall be upon them that have given us an invitation of this kind: and it may be your greatest comfort, that now ye may go homely unto the Lord, being formerly in covenant with Him; and your greatest credit also, for ye never got such a credit, as to lend your Master's honour a lift. We come to the excuses.

"But they went their way, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise." Luke is more large in this, and saith, "I have bought a piece of ground, and must needs go see it;" another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them;" and the third said, "I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come." 1. We learn here, that never a man refuses Christ but from some by-respects, such as a farm, oxen, and marriage. I never saw a man staying back from the covenant, but from some by-respects; either some respect to the world, or to men, or to the court, or such bastard by-respects to some statesmen, or to a prelate, or to the King himself, who, we trust, ere it be long, shall think them the honestest men that came in soonest; therefore cast away all by-respects. The apostle John includes their excuses under three different expressions, "The pride of life," including the farm; "The lust of the heart," including the merchandise; and "The lust of the flesh," including the marriage. Therefore let every soul that would love and follow Christ, deny himself, and lay aside excuses. Deny thy own wit, will, and vanities, and

lay aside all by-respects, and I shall warrand thou shalt come running, and get Christ in thy arms. 2. Is it a respect to prelacy that hinders thee, O Scotland? cursed be the day that ever they were born. 3. Is it a respect to the novations already come into Scotland? I may say cursed be these brats of Babel. It had been best to have rent them at the beginning, for many woful days have they brought on, and woful divisions have they brought in, and woful backslidings have they occasioned. Therefore away with these by-respects. 4. Is it a respect to the king? The Lord bless our king. Says not the covenant enough for the maintenance of the king? As for the word which they call combinations, it reserves always the honour of God, and the honour of the king; protesting, that we mind nothing that may tend to the diminution of the king's greatness and authority. Yea, I know no other means under heaven to make many loyal subjects, but by renewing our covenant.

I would have had the men that made these excuses framing them another way; I would have had him that married the wife, saying, My wife has married me: and he that bought his oxen, saying, My oxen have bought me; and he that went to his farm, saying, My farm has bought me. And if ye will mark the words, ye will find them run this way. 1. Marriage is lawful; but when a man beasts himself in his carnal pleasures, then the wife marries the man; "therefore let them that have wives, be as though they had them not, and them that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not." 2. Buying of farms is lawful, but when a man becomes a slave to his own gain, it takes away the soul of him, the farm buys the man; likewise husbandry is lawful, but when a man yokes his neck under the world, it trails and turmoils him so, that he cannot take on the yoke of Jesus. 3. Thus also the merchandise buys the man. Then, for Jesus Christ's sake, cast away all excuses, and come away now, and marry Christ. 1. Away with thy

bastard pleasures. 2. Away with thy bastard cares, and come away to Christ, and He shall season all thy cares. 3. Away with thy falsehood, thy pride, vanity, &c. Away with thy corn, wine and oil, and come to Christ, and He shall lift up His countenance upon thee. The Lord give thee a blink of that, and then thou wilt come hopping with all thy speed, like unto old Jacob, when he saw the angels ascending and descending, then he ran fast, albeit he was tired, and had got a hard bed, and a far harder bolster the night before, yet he got a glorious sight, and his legs were soupled with consolation, which made him run. Lord blink upon thy lazy soul with His amiable countenance, and then thou shalt rise and run, and thy fainting heart will receive strength, when the Lord puts in His hand by the key-hole of the door, and leaves drops of myrrh behind Him, then a sleepy bride will rise and seek her Beloved. But to our point.

Marriage is lawful, merchandise is lawful, husbandry is lawful, but never one of these is lawful when they hinder thee from the Lord. Neither credit, pleasure, preferment, houses nor lands are lawful, when they hinder thee from the Lord's sweet presence. Jerome said well, "Though my old father were hanging about my neck, and my sweet mother had me in her arms, and all my dear children were sticking about me, yet when my Lord Jesus called upon me, I would cast off my old father, and throw my sweet mother under foot, and throw away all my dear children, and run away to my Lord Jesus." Lord grant, my beloved, that what ye have heard of Christ may sink in your souls: and when ye have seen poor things running here and there, to get a prayer here, and a prayer there, and ye wonder what they are seeking, they are seeking their Beloved; and if ye ask, "What is their Beloved more than another?" They will answer, my Beloved is the fairest and trimmest, and the highest and honourablest in the world; He has the sweetest

eyes, the sweetest cheeks, the sweetest lips, and trimmest legs and arms, "yea He is altogether lovely;" and then they will be made to cry out, "O thou fairest among women, tell us whither is thy Beloved gone, that we may seek Him with thee?" O if we knew Him! Lord work upon you the knowledge of Him. O what a business would you make to be at Him! Lord grant that our ministry may leave a stamp upon your hearts. Then had we gotten a rich purchase. Would to God ye were like that marquis in Italy, who fled from thence to Geneva, being persecuted by the Jesuits; and when they followed him, and offered him sums of gold, he answered, "Let those perish forever who part with an hour's fellowship with Christ, for all the gold under heaven." And sundry of the martyrs being at the stake, having this and that offered to them, they had still this word, None but Christ, none but Christ: and when they were bidden, Have mind of your well favoured wife, and your poor children: they answered, "If I had all the money and gold in the world, I would give it to stay with my wife and poor children, if it were but in a stinking prison; but sweet Christ is dearer unto me than all." Then cast away all excuse. Would to God we were like that woman, when going to the stake; "I have borne many children, (says she) and yet notwithstanding of all these pains, I would suffer them all over again, for one hour's fellowship with my Lord." Then come away, come away, cast away all excuses, come away; as the Saviour says, "The storm is past and over, the winter is away, the time of singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; arise, my fair one, and come away." God be thanked, there is a sad winter over Scotland's head, and our figs are blossoming, and our trees are budding, and bringing forth fruit, now is the turtle singing, and his voice is heard in our land: now is Christ's voice heard, now is our Bridegroom standing waiting on our way-coming; and here am I in His

name, crying unto you, Come away: here am I to honour my Master: all honour be to Him for ever and ever. Come away then, for the winter is going, the summer is approaching, our vines are blossoming, in token of a fair summer: arise, arise, and come away.

Ver. 9. "Go ye, therefore, out to the highways:" as if He would say, Well, I see the Jews will not come in; "therefore go your ways and fetch in the Gentiles." Yet I hope in God, there shall many of the Jews come in shortly. They spake for you, when ye could not speak for yourselves; they said, "We have a little sister, and she has no breasts; what shall we do for her in the day she shall be spoken for?" Now pray ye for them. Always they refused to come in, as ye heard; and not being worthy, they would not come to Him, to make them worthy.——Always, says the Lord, go out, and call in the Gentiles to My table, My Son may not want a wife: He is too great a king to want a spouse, and My supper is too good cheer to be lost; therefore go and fetch in the Gentiles. I thank the Lord that ye are come in. I know not a town in the kingdom of Scotland that is not come in, except one, and I am afraid for the wrath of God to light on that shortly. Always God hath His own time. But trow ye, that God will give that honour to every one? Nay. I protest in my own silly judgment (howbeit I cannot scance upon kings crowns) that it were the greatest honour that ever king Charles got, to subscribe the covenant. But trow ye that every minister and every burgh will come in? Nay: if you will read the history, 2 Chron. xxx. 10, you will see the contrary; when Hezekiah was going to renew the covenant, and to keep the passover, the holy text says, that numbers mocked, and thought themselves over jelly to come in; but those whose hearts the Lord had touched, they came in and kept the blyth day. Indeed I was afraid once, that Christ would have left old Scotland, and gone to new Scotland, and that

He would have left old England, and gone to new England: and think ye not but He can easily do this? Has He not a famous church in America, where He may go? Indeed I know not a kingdom in all the world, but if their plots had gone on, they had been at antichrist's shore ere now; but all his limbs and liths, I hope shall be broken, and then shall our Lord be great: therefore come away in with your wedding garment, and ye that have not put it on, now put it on, and come away to the marriage: and I thank the Lord, that ye are prevailed with, by God's assisting of our faithful brethren to bring you in; the Lord grant that ye may come in with your wedding garment. It is but a small matter for you to hold up your hand; and yet, I suspect, some of you when it was in doing took a back-side. I tell you that it is no matter of sport, to board with God: therefore come away with your wedding garment; for the Master of the feast sees you, and knows all that are come to the marriage feast. I know you not, but my Master knows you every one: He knows who came in on Sabbath and who came in yesterday, and who will come in to-day, and who are going to put on their wedding garment, and cast away their duds. Away with your duds of pride, your duds of greed and of malice; away with all these duds, and be like the poor blind man in the gospel, who when he knew that Christ called him, he cast his old cloak from him, and came away; so do ye, cast aside all excuses, and come to the wedding. And now with a word of the wedding garment I will end.

This wedding garment consists of three pieces: 1. There is one piece of it looks to God, and that is holiness. 2. There is another piece of it looks to ourselves, and that is sobriety. 3. Another piece of it looks to our neighbour, and that is righteousness.

The first is holiness; I charge you to put it on: ye that are the provost and bailies, I love you dearly, and all the

members of the town; gentlemen, and all gentlewomen, and all of you I love you dearly; and therefore I charge you all before God, in my last farewell unto you, to be holy, according as ye have sworn in your covenant.

2. Be sober. Howbeit I be a stranger, yet I like brotherly love and Christian fellowship well; but drunkenness and gluttony, feasting and carousing I hate, especially now when the kirk of Scotland is going in dool-weed: therefore be sober. 1. Be sober in your apparel; I think there is too much of gaudy apparel among you. 2. Be sober in your conceits. 3. Be sober in your judgments. 4. Be sober in your self-conceiting. 5. Be sober in your speaking. 6. Be sober in your sleeping. 7. Be sober in your lawful recreations. 8. Be sober in your lawful pleasures: and finally be sober in all respects; that it may be seen ye are the people that have renewed your covenant.

3. Be righteous. I know not if ye have false weights and balances among you; but whether there be or not, I give you all charge, who have sworn the covenant, to be righteous.

In a word, this wedding garment is Jesus Christ; "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." I cannot give you a better counsel nor Christ gave to Martha; forget the many things, and choose that one thing which is needful; and with David, still desire that one thing, "To behold the beauty of the Lord in His temple;" and with Paul, "Forget the things that are behind, and press forward to the prize of the high-calling thro' Jesus Christ." The Lord fill your hearts with the love of Christ.

If thou askest, What will this garment do to thee? I answer, This garment serves, 1. For necessity. 2. For ornament. 3. For distinction.

1. For necessity. And this is threefold. 1. To cover thy nakedness, and hide thy shame. 2. To defend thy body from the cold of winter, and heat of summer. 3. For

necessity, to hold in the life of the body. So put on Jesus Christ this wedding garment; and, 1. He shall cover the shame of thy nakedness with the white linen of His righteousness. 2. He shall defend thee when the wind of trial begins to blow rough and hard, and when the blast of the terrible One is arising, to rain fire and brimstone upon the world; "Then He shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and a place of refuge for a covert from storm and from rain." "A refuge from the storm, and shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." When men are pursuing, He shall be a brazen wall about thee: and when they pursue thee, He shall keep thee in His bosom.

2. A garment is for an ornament. Who is the best favoured body; and the trimmest soul? Even the poor soul that has put on the bridegroom Jesus: that soul is fair and white, and altogether lovely, "There is no spot in it," because the Lord hath put upon it, "Broidered work, bracelets and ornaments."

3. A garment is for distinction. There must be a distinction among you, between you and the wicked world, because ye have renewed your covenant with God: and this distinction must not only be outwardly (for an hypocrite may seem indeed very fair) but it must be by inward application. I desire you all that are hearing me, not only to put it on, but to hold it on: put it on, and hold it on: for it is not like another garment, neither in matter, nor shape, nor in use, nor in durance. I may not insist to handle it, but it is not like other garments, especially it is not like a bridegroom's garment, which he has on to-day, and off to-morrow. Therefore I charge you all your days, to hold it on. Ay, that which ye had on upon Sabbath last, and yesterday, and which you have on this day, see that ye cast it not off to-morrow. What heard you cried on Sabbath last, and yesterday, and this day? Hosanna, hosanna. And wherefore cried ye

yesterday and this day, Hosanna, hosanna? Look that when we are away, and your ministers not preaching to you, that ye cry not, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." I fear that many who last Sabbath, yesterday and this day, have been crying Hosanna, hosanna, shall, long ere the next Sabbath, cry, "Crucify Him, and hang Him up." But I charge you, O sons of Zion, and ye daughters of Jerusalem, that your tongues never cease in crying, Hosanna, till Christ come and dwell in your soul.

Ye that are masters of this college, if ye count me worthy to speak to you, I would have you keep your garments clean, and take heed that ye be not spotted with uncovenanted spots. Ye that are scholars, take heed what sort of learning and traditions ye drink in, and hold your garments clean. We hear of too many colleges in the land, that are spotted; but we hope in God that ye are yet clean: and young and old of you, take all heed to your garments, that they be white, and clean, and beautiful.

For the Lord's sake, all ye that are hearing me, take heed to your garments, but especially ye that have subscribed your covenant, take heed to your garments; for blyth will your adversaries be, to see any spot on them. And therefore, for the Lord's sake, study to be holy; otherwise papists will rejoice at it, and the weak will stumble at it: and so ye will wound and bore the sweet side of Christ. And therefore put on your wedding garment, hold it on, and hold it clean; walk wisely and before the world.

Now I commend you to Him Who is able to strengthen, stablish and settle you: to Him be glory, honour and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

[*Fac-simile of old Title page of following Sermon.*]

The Evil and Danger of Prelacy.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT A

GENERAL MEETING,

IN THE

Black-Fryar-Church of *Edinburgh*,

Upon the 13th Day of *June*, 1638,

AT

THE Beginning of our laſt REFORMATION from *Prelacy*, after the Renovation of the NATIONAL COVENANT.

By the Reverend Mr. ANDREW CANT, ſometime Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Aberdeen*.

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1 PETER v 3 *Neither as being Lords over God's Heritage: but being enſamples to the Flock.*

GLASGOW,
Printed for GEORGE PATON, Book-ſeller in *Linlithgow*. MDCCXLI.

THE NATIONAL COVENANT.

SERMON AT EDINBURGH.*

BY ANDREW CANT.

"Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it."
—*Zech.* iv. 7.

I PERCEIVE that God will have His temple built, which had been long neglected; partly by the worldliness of the people, who had greater care of their own houses, than of the house of God; as appears by the prophet Haggai, chap. i. 3, 4. He reproves them for this fault, that they cared more for their own houses than for the house of God; partly, because of the great impediments and difficulties they apprehended in the work. Yet God, having a purpose to have it builded, sends His prophets to stir them up to the building of it. As for impediments He promises to remove them all, and assures them of this by Haggai and Zechariah; yea, He shews to Zerubbabel and the people, that although impediments were as mountains, yet they should be removed.

I need not stand upon introductions and connections: this verse I have read, shows the scope of the prophet; viz. God will have His work going on, and all impediments

* This sermon was preached at a "General Meeting" in Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh, on 13th June, 1638, after the Renovation of the Covenant. In Erskine's edition, Black-Fryar is a misprint for Gray-Fryar.

removed. These times require that I should rather insist upon application to the present work of reformation in hand, than to stand upon the temple of Jerusalem, which we know well enough was a type of Christ's kirk, which in this land was once built, but now hath been defaced by the enemies of Christ: we have long neglected the re-edifying of it; partly, men being given more to build their own houses, nor the house of Christ; and partly, because of the great impediments that have discouraged God's people to meddle with it. Now, it hath pleased God to stir up prophets, noblemen, and people of the land, to put their hands to this work. And I think God saith to you in this text, "Who art thou, O great mountain? thou shalt become a a plain."

There are two parts in this text: 1. An impediment removed, under the name of a mountain, "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel, thou shalt become a plain." 2. In the second part of the text, the work goeth up, and is finished, the impediment being removed, "He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace be unto it."

But that ye may take up all that is to be said in order and method; there are six steps in the text, three in the mountain, impeding the work, and three in the work itself. The three in the mountain are these: 1. It is a mountain seen, "O great mountain!" 2. A mountain reproved, "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel." 3. A mountain removed, "Thou shalt become a plain." The three in the work are: 1. A work growing and going up. 2. A work finished, "He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof." 3. A work praised, "He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace be unto it." I shall speak of all these, God willing, and apply them to the time.

As for the three in the mountain. 1. It is a mountain

seen; it is called a *great mountain;* under this are comprehended all impediments and difficulties impeding the building; all being taken together make up a great mountain, which is unpassable; the enemies who impede this work were this mountain: look and ye will see the adversaries of Judah become a great mountain in the way of that work.

That ye may take up this mountain the better, I find that kings are called mountains in Scripture; and good kings are so called, for these three, 1. For their sublimity; as mountains are high above the valleys, so are kings lifted up in majesty above their subjects: some apply that place to kings, "Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth." 2. They are called mountains for their strength to guard their people. David saith, "God hath made my mountain strong." 3. Good kings are called mountains, by reason of their influence for peace to the people: "The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness." I find also, that the strong enemies of the church are called mountains, because of the great impediments to the kirk's building that are made by them, as ye may see in Psalm cxliv.

This mountain (that I may speak more plainly) is Prelacy, which hath ever been the mountain in the way of our reformation. It may be, some of you that hear me, are not of my judgment concerning episcopacy; for my judgment, I ever condemned it, as having no warrant for it to be in Christ's house; yet I am sure, that all of you that are here this day, will agree with me in this, that prelacy being antichristian, is intolerable: but such is the prelacy of this kirk, it is antichristian. I may easily prove, that amongst many marks of antichrist, these two are most evident, false doctrine and tyranny in government: where antichrist is, there is tyrannical government, imposing laws upon the

consciences of God's people; where antichrist is, there is idolatry, superstition and error; these two are clearly in our prelacy: their idolatry, superstition, and error may be seen in their service-book, their tyranny may be seen in their book of canons. I think there are none here, but they may see this mountain: no greater tyranny hath ever been used by antichrist, than hath been used by our prelates, and exercised upon this kirk.

This mountain being seen by you all; I would have you take a view of the quality of it. I find in Scripture, that the enemies of the kirk being called mountains, are so called, because of these three qualities: the first is in Psalm lxxvi. 4. they are called "mountains of prey;" so called, because from them the robbers rush down to the vallies, and prey upon the passengers. The second is in Jer. li. 25, Babylon, a great enemy to God's kirk, is called a "destroying mountain;" the word in its own language, is called a *pestiferous* mountain, (so called) because the pest destroys. The third is in Isa. ii. 14, they are called "mountains of pride;" compared with the twelfth verse, you will find these mountains called "mountains of pride."

Our mountain of prelacy hath all these three bad qualities: 1. It is a mountain from which they have, like robbers, made a prey of the kirk of Christ. Tell me, I pray you, and I appeal to your own consciences, who are my brethren, if there be any privilege or liberty that ever Christ gave us, but they have taken it from us, and made a prey of it. 2. This mountain is a pestiferous mountain; it hath been the mountain that hath been as a pest, to infect the kirk of Christ with superstition, heresy and error; and withal, it hath been a destroying mountain; for they have destroyed the fair carved work of our first reformation. 3. They are mountains of pride; for greater pride cannot be, than there is upon this mountain; they rule as tyrants over their brethren, and as lords over God's inheritance.

Ye that are noblemen are the natural mountains of this kingdom, descended of noble predecessors who have been as mountains indeed, defending both kirk and commonwealth. These men were but low vallies, and now are artificial mountains, made up by the art of man; at first, as low as their brethren sitting there; but piece and piece, they have mounted up; at first, commissioners for the kirk, and then obtained vote in parliament, and then they usurped all the liberties of the kirk benefices, and then constant moderators to make up this mountain; and at last, the high commission is given to make the mountain strong; it is like to Daniel's tree. "The tree grew, and was strong;" and from it, we that are ministers of Christ have our wreck.

And let me speak to you noblemen, these artificial and stooted mountains have over-topped you who are the natural mountains; and if they have not done so, What means the great seal then? and if way could have made for it, they should have carried the white wand and privy-seal also: and this is just with God, that they have over-topped you; for every one of you came with your own shovel-ful, to make up this mountain. It was thought expedient to rear up this mountain, to command and bear down poor ministers. Albeit, it is true, we have been borne down by them; yet ye that are the high mountains, have not been free from their hurt: it is very like to Jotham's parable, "The trees of the forest will have a king over them; they come to the olive-tree, and say, Be thou king over us: the olive saith, I will not leave my fatness to be king: they came to the fig-tree, and said, Be thou our king; the fig-tree saith, I will not leave my sweetness to be king: they come likewise to the vine, and say, Be thou our king; the vine saith, I will not leave my strength to be king: they come to the bramble and said, Be thou our king; then said the bramble to the trees, If indeed ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust under my shadow; and if not,

let fire come forth of the bramble, and devour the tall cedars of Lebanon." The olive-trees of the ministry would not leave the fatness of God's grace, wherewith they were endued, to rule over the kirk: the fig-trees of the ministry would not leave the sweet fruits of their ministry, to bear rule in the kirk: the vines of the ministry would not leave the strong consolations of God, whereby many souls were comforted, to bear rule in the kirk: yet the brambles have taken this, and ye helped to exalt them, upon condition to trust under their shadow; and if fire hath not come forth from these brambles upon the tall cedars of this land, I leave to your own thoughts to judge. Always this is the mountain which ye see all reared up this day, and standing in the way of our reformation.

2. The second thing in this great mountain is this, It is a mountain reproved: "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel." When he saith of Zerubbabel, it is not only meant of Zerubbabel, but of the rest of God's people. There, Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the rest of God's people obeyed the voice of the Lord; and in the 14th verse, all these are said to work in the house of the Lord: so under Zerubbabel, all the rest of the people are comprehended; even so in this work of ours, all that are joined to this work, for the building of this work, are to be accounted workers; and for them also is this mountain reproved, "Who art thou, O great mountain?" Who art thou, who will impede this work, or shall be able to impede it, seeing God will have it forward. It is impossible for thee to impede it, in these three respects: 1. In respect of the work itself. 2. In respect of the workers. 3. In respect of the impeders.

1. In respect of the work itself. It is God's work; for the house is His, and He is in it. The Lord saith, "Be thou strong, Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and the remnant of the people and work, for I am with you, saith the Lord of

hosts." If God be with a work, who is he that will let or impede it? God is with this work of reformation, as ye yourselves can witness; and by all our expectations this mountain is shaken, and (God be praised) the difficulties are not so unpassable as they were.

2. No man is able to impede this work, in respect of the workers. It is said, "that God stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, and of Joshua, and of the people, and they came and wrought in the house of the Lord." When God stirs up men to do a good work, nothing on earth can stay it: I am sure if ever God stirred up men to a good work, He hath stirred us up to this, both noblemen, ministers and people. Wherefore, "Who art thou, O great mountain" before God's people, that thinks to impede such a work?

3. In respect of the impeders: what are they but men, and wicked men, as ye may see in the adversaries of the Jews. Who are they that impede our work? Even men that seek honour and preferment of this world, enemies to religion, fighting against God; to whom, I may say that word in Job, "Who hath hardened himself against God, and prospered?" With one word more I will reprove this mountain, and go forward.

"Who art thou, O great mountain?" Wilt thou search thyself who thou art: art thou of God's building or not? I trow you are not *juris divini*, but *humani;* God nor Christ hath never built thee: thou art only a hill of man's erecting; knowest thou not that Zion, against which thou art, is a hill of God's building. I will say to you then that word, "The hill of God is a high hill, as the hill of Bashan: why leap ye, ye hills? This is the hill that God desireth to dwell in; yea, and will dwell in it forever." And think ye to prevail against the people of Zion? She hath stronger mountains to guard her than ye have, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people, from henceforth and forever."

3. The third thing in this mountain, is, It is a mountain removed, "Thou shalt become a plain;" that is, God shall remove all impediments before Zerubbabel, and his people; God is able to remove all that impedes His work; even the mightiest enemies that oppose themselves to the work of God. Ye may observe a fourfold power of God against these mountains.

1. A *determining power*, whereby He sets such bounds to the greatest mountains, that ye see they fall not upon the vallies, albeit they overtop them. The Lord hath set bounds to the great kings in the world which they could not pass, when they have set themselves against the Lord's people. We may see an example of this in Sennacherib. "Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come up to this city, nor shoot an arrow against it, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it." Ye are afraid of the king, that he come against you: fear not, the Lord by His restraining power is able to keep him back, that he shall not shoot so much as a bullet against this city.

2. God removes impediments by His *assisting power*, as He promised to do before Cyrus. "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the iron bars." Albeit for any thing we see, there be brazen gates, and iron bars, closing out a reformation: yet let not this discourage you; God is with you by His assisting power to go before you, to make all crooked places straight, and to break the brazen gates, and to cut in sunder the iron bars.

3. God hath a *changing power*, whereby He makes mountains plain: how easy is it with God, to make the highest mountain that impedes His work a plain? "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters, to turn it whithersoever He will." Lord make our mountains thus plain.

The 4th way how God removes mountains, is by an *overthrowing power:* If there be no change yet, God will bring it down. "Every one that is lifted up shall be brought low."

By this which hath been said, ye may understand how a mountain may be made plain. God makes mountains plains, either in mercy or in wrath. 1. In mercy, when He takes a grip of the heart, and of a proud haughty heart, makes it toward and plain: we have seen such a change by experience. This work had many enemies at the beginning, that impeded it, whom God hath taken by the heart, and made plain; yea, He hath made them furtherers of the work.

2. There is another way of making mountains plain, to wit, making plain in wrath; when God overthrows the mountains that stand up impeding His work. Assure yourselves, if God bring not down this mountain we have to do with, in mercy, He shall overthrow it in wrath, and make it waste. That I may make this mountain more plain, ye shall consider how it shall become a plain, and how easily it may be made a plain.

1. I see you looking up to the height of it, and ye are saying within yourselves, How shall it come down? Ye must not think that it will come down of its own accord; God useth instruments to pull down. I find that God hath made His own people instruments to pull down such mountains: "Fear not, worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel, I will help thee, saith the holy One and thy Redeemer, behold I will make thee a new threshing instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff; thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them." Mark these words, although Jacob be a worm, despised by the great ones of the world, yet God will make him a threshing instrument, to beat these mountains in pieces. The professors of this land are

despised by the mountains; yet fear not, for the sharp threshing instrument is made, I hope it shall beat the mountains in pieces. We think them very high, but if we had faith, that word would be verified. "Ye shall say to this mountain, remove to yonder place, and it shall be removed, and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

But one is saying, I have not faith, that all that are joined this day against the mountain shall continue. I hope they shall continue, I hope they shall; but if they do not, we trust not in men, that they shall bring down this mountain, but in God, who hath said, "Behold I am against thee, O destroying mountain, I will stretch out My hand upon thee, I will roll thee down from the rocks, and make thee a burnt mountain; they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a foundation: thou shalt be desolate for ever." This mountain ye see so exalted, although men would hold it up, yet God will bring it down, and make it a burnt mountain: even so, O Lord, do.

2. In the second place consider how this mountain may be made a plain: I told you it was but an artificial mountain, a stooted mountain, standing upon weak pillars; if ye would take a look of the whole frame of the mountain, it stands upon two main pillars; and upon the top of the mountain stands the house of Dagon, an house of false worship, and take me the pillars from episcopacy, and it shall fall; take episcopacy away, and the house of Dagon shall fall. The two main pillars that prelacy stands on are a civil and secular arm, and an ecclesiastical tongue, so to speak.

1. The *secular arm* is the authority of princes, which have ever upholden that mountain: ye know secular princes uphold antichrist, and prelacy in this land is upholden by the secular power. 2. The second pillar I call *ecclesiastical*, that is, prelacy in this land hath been upholden by the tongues of kirkmen, preaching up this mountain, or, by

their pens, writing up this mountain: and these are the two pillars whereupon our mountain of prelacy is stooted, the secular power, and the tongues of kirkmen. Let the king withdraw his power and authority from the prelates, and they shall fall suddenly in dross; let kirkmen and ministers withdraw their tongues and pens from them, and our mountain (ere ye look about you) shall become a plain. As these two stoot up this mountain, so upon this mountain all false worship in the kirk is built, even Dagon's house. "Lead me," says Samson, "to the pillars that Dagon's house stands on, that I may be avenged for my two eyes." The Philistines were never more cruel to Samson in pulling out his eyes, than our prelates would have been to us: they pressed to put out our eyes, and ere ever we were aware, they thought to lead us to Dagon's house, even to the tents of popery and idolatry. Let us come to this main pillar of Dagon's house, and apply all our strength to pull it down; that we may not only be avenged for our eyes, which they have thought to pull out, but also that the house of false worship, which is erected upon this mountain, may fall to the ground.

I hear some say, Minister, for all you are saying, the mountain will not come down at this time; ye think nothing but it will come down. I assure you, I would have it down, but ye must not think us that silly, as to think it will come down, because we have many for us; we trust not in men, but in God; and if this be the time that God will have it down, although ye should lay all your hands about their head, they shall come down: it appears they will come down, if there were no more but their pride, avarice, cruelty, and loose living to pull them down, especially when all these are come to height, as they are come to in them. And so much for the mountain; ye see we have reproved it, God remove it.

I come now to the three in the work, the mountain being

removed. 1. It is a work growing and going up; "He shall bring forth." 2. It is a work finished; "He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof." 3. It is a work praised; "He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shouting, crying, grace, grace, be unto it." We shall speak of all these three shortly.

1. It is a work going up; it was impeded, but now it is going up. There is something here very considerable; the work goes not up until the mountain be made a plain. The mountain must not be pared or topped, but it must altogether become plain, otherwise the work cannot go up, the mountain of prelacy must not be pared nor topped, something taken away, but it must be brought down wholly, otherwise the work of Reformation cannot go on, neither Christ's house go up.

It will be said, What ails you? You shall have your desires, but the estate of bishops must stand; it is impossible to bring it down altogether; the king may not want an estate, (truly a good one both to kirk and commonwealth) ye shall have them brought within the old bounds and caveats set down to them; they shall not hurt the kirk any more. The Lord knows how loath I was to speak from this place; but seeing God hath thrust me out, I must speak the truth.

I say to you these quarters are not to be taken, because the mountain is not of God's making, but of man's; therefore make it what ye will, God will be displeased with it; yea it is impossible to set caveats to keep them. I appeal to all your consciences, Is it possible to set caveats to their pride and avarice? Their pride and avarice will break through ten thousand caveats. I will clear this impossibility by similitudes. Tell me, if a fountain in the town of Edinburgh were poisoned, whether were it more safe to stop up the fountain, than to set a guard to keep it, that none draw out of it, for there is hope the poison would do no harm? There is no

man of a sound judgment, but he will think it more safe to stop up the fountain, than to guard it: this prelacy is the poisoned fountain, wherefrom the kirk of Christ hath been poisoned with the poison of error and superstition. Now the question is, Whether it be safer to stop it up than to guard it? Surely it is safer to stop it up; for all the caveats in the world will not keep the kirk unpoisoned, so long as it remains. I will give you another similitude: If the town of Edinburgh were (as many towns have been, and are) taken and possest by cruel and obstinate enemies, who would take all your liberties from you, would not suffer your magistrates to judge, and would spoil you of your goods, and use all the cruelty that could be devised against the inhabitants, if God give you occasion to be free of such a cruel and obstinate enemy: what would you do if this were proponed to you? Why may not you suffer the enemy to abide within the town? We shall take all their weapons from them, they shall never hurt you any more. Would ye not think it far better to put them out of the town altogether; both because the inhabitants would be in fear, so long as they were in the town, and because the town would never be sure: for there might be traitors among yourselves, who would steal in weapons for their hands; and so they would bring you under the former tyranny, yea under a greater. Even so it is in this case; the cruelest and greatest enemies that ever the kirk of Scotland saw are those prelates; they have spoiled us of all our liberties, and exercised intolerable tyranny over us. Now the Lord is shewing a way how to be quit of them: consider the condition offered. What ails you? May ye not let them abide within the kirk: we shall take all their weapons from them; as admission of ministers, excommunication, and that terrible high commission; they shall never hurt you again. This is but the counsel of man; the counsel of God is, to put them out of the kirk altogether, otherwise the kirk can never be

secure; yea, I assure you, there are as many traitors among ourselves, as would steal in the weapons again in their hands; then shall our latter estate be worse than our first: if our yoke be heavy under them now, it shall be heavier then; if they chastise us now with whips, they shall chastise us then with scorpions. I think I hear men speak like that word, "Hew down the tree, cut down his branches, shake off his leaves, scatter his fruits; nevertheless leave the stump of his roots with a band of iron and brass." The interpretation of that part of the vision is set down in the 26th verse; "Thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou hast known that the heavens bear rule." I hear men say, Hew down the tree, cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, scatter his fruits; ye shall be quit of all that; but the stump must be left banded with iron. (If it were till they knew God, it were something, but there is no appearance of that.) Consider, O man, who saith that. "No man, but the watcher, and the holy One, even He that made Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom sure to him." If God had made this estate sure to them, it would and should stand: and if God would bind down the stump of it with iron bands, we would never fear the growth of it, nor the fruit of it; but seeing they are only bands to be laid on by men, albeit the tree were hewed down, it would grow again in all the branches of it, with all the leaves of its dignity, and we should taste of the bitter fruit of it: ye that are covenanters, be not deceived, if ye leave so much as a hillock of this mountain in despite of your hearts it shall grow to a high mountain, which shall fill both kirk and commonwealth. If the kirk would be quit of the troubles of it, and if ye would have this work of reformation going up, this mountain must be made a plain altogether, otherwise the Spirit of God saith, Ye shall never prosper.

The second thing in this is a work finished; "He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof." When a head-stone is

put on a house, the house is finished: ye who are reverend fathers in the kirk, who have seen the work of our first reformation, ye saw it going up, and brought to such a perfection, that the cope-stone was put on; purity of doctrine, and administration of sacraments, and sweetness of government, whereby the kirk was ruled; but woe's us all, we see with you now the roof taken off, the glorious work pulled down, and lying desolate. Now, it hath pleased God to turn again, and offer a re-edifying of this work, as He did here to the people of this temple: seeing therefore the Lord hath stirred up our spirits, to crave a re-edifying of Christ's kirk, let us never take our hands from it, till Christ have put the cope-stone on it.

I hear some say, There is more ado ere that be done; ye sing the triumph before the victory; ye will not see it go up at leisure. Ye are deceived; we sing not the triumph before the victory; some of us are afraid that it go not up so suddenly. I must say to you, if it be God's work, (as it is indeed) all the powers of the world shall never be able to hinder the putting on of the cope-stone. Ay, but say ye, It will be hindered; ere ye get the work forward, ye will find the dint of the fire and sword. Let it be so, if God will have it so, that will not impede the work: if our blood be spilt in this cause, the cope-stone shall be put on with our blood; for the kirk of God hath never prospered better nor by the blood of saints. Fear not, beloved, this work, whether it be done peaceably or with persecution, the cope-stone shall be put on it. Ye know in the beginning of the reformation, there was small likelihood that the work should go up, and be finished, because of the great power that was against it; yet the Lord brought it forward against all impediments; and put the cope-stone on it: that same God lives yet, and is as able to put the cope-stone on this work, as He was then, if ye believe.

The third thing in this work is a work praised; "He shall

bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, grace, grace unto it." All ye that build and behold the work, will love the work, and will all wish it well. He alludes by appearance, who, when the foundation of a common work is laid, rejoices, and when it is finished, rejoices. Ye may see this clear in Ezra iii. 11 : at the laying of the foundation of this temple, the people shouted with a great shout : if they did that at the laying of the foundation, much more shall they do it at the bringing forth of the head-stone thereof; as is said here, the words they cry, grace, grace. The phrase comprehends under it these three things :

1. A wish of the people of God, whereby they wish prosperity to the work. Ye may see it was a common wish. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, As ye shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity : the Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness."

2. It comprehends under it a thanksgiving : the workers give all praise to the work. When the builders laid the foundation of the temple, they set the priests with their trumpets, and the Levites with their cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David : "They sang by course, praising God, and giving thanks unto the Lord, because He is good, and His mercy endureth forever."

3. The third thing it comprehends under it, is a faithful acknowledgment that the work is built and finished, by no power and strength of men, but by the grace of God. Look the verse preceding the text, and ye will find it thus, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts :" ye may easily apply this. Our work that God is bringing up, and will finish, should be a praised work, our wishes should be to it : "The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness." Our song of thanks-giving should be in our mouths, "God is good, and His mercy endureth forever."—Albeit it go up, let us not ascribe

any thing to ourselves, but let us ascribe all to the grace of God; and this will stop all the mouths of disdainers, who say, "Who are ye, who think to finish such a work?" We answer, "It will be finished, not by might, nor by strength of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts."

There are three sorts looking to this work, and to the going up of it: 1. Evil-willers. 2. Well-wishers. 3. Neutrals. 1. The evil-willers are Edom; and he was Jacob's brother; yet in Psalm cxxxvii. he cries, "raze, raze this work to the foundation." There is a number that is crying, raze, raze this work to the foundation. 2. There is a second sort that are well-wishers, crying, grace, grace be unto it. In those former years, the shout of raze, raze, hath been louder than grace, grace; but now, God be praised, the shout of grace, grace, is louder than raze, raze. 3. There is a third sort gazing upon this work, who dare not cry, raze, raze, because they are borne down with grace, grace; they dare not cry grace, grace,for fear of authority. What shall I say to these neutrals? They are so incapable of admonition, that it will be a spending of time to crave their concurrence to the work. To whom shall I speak then? My text is an apostrophe, if I may use one; that which I shall use first is God's own words from Isaiah, "Hear, O heavens, hearken, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me."

I will next turn me to strangers and foreigners. All ye of reformed kirks (What! have I said strangers? These men who are brought up in the kirk, are strangers from the womb; but) ye are joined with us in a corporation; come therefore with your fellow-feeling, let us hear your shouts and cries of, grace, grace, be unto the Kirk of Scotland; and let your wishes condemn these ungrateful neutrals, who profess themselves children of this kirk, and yet will not rejoice with us for the good of our mother.

Now, ye have heard this text in all these six steps.

1. A mountain seen. 2. A mountain reproved and disdained. 3. A mountain to be removed. 4. A growing work 5. To be finished. 6. With great applause of all well-willers, wishing grace unto the work. And seeing I have ado with this great mountain; both with mountains that impede this work, and all ranks of persons, removers of the work, I will direct my speech to these with the apostrophe in the text.

And first, To the mountains lying in the way of this reformation: I rank them in two sorts, viz., prelates, and upholders of prelates. O prelates, if I had hope to come speed with you, I would exhort you in the name of Christ, to lay down your worldly dignity, and help us to exalt the kirk of Christ: but I fear ye have hardened yourselves so against the truth, that nothing will prevail with you, except ye keep your worldly monarchy; yet ye shall be forced to take up my apostrophe, "O mountains of Gilboa, on whom the anointed of the Lord is fallen, neither come dew nor rain upon you." Ye are these mountains, upon whom Christ and His Anointed have been slain; the dew and rain of God's grace are not on you: ye may well receive fatness from beneath, to make you great in this world: but from above, ye are not bedewed with the grace of God, without which, whatever your bodies be, ye have clean souls. Under this curse I leave you, and turn to you, O great mountains; great men, who are putting your shoulders to hold up this mountain of prelacy: I beseech you, if ye have any love to Christ, to take your shoulders, and help from this pestiferous mountain the wreck of Christ's kirk. And if exhortance will not prevail with you, I charge you in the name of the great God, and His Son Jesus Christ, to whom one day ye must give your account, that ye in nowise underprop this mountain; the which if ye obey, I am sure the Lord will bless you, and your posterity; but if ye will not, though ye were never so high a mountain in this kingdom, ye shall become a plain.

In particular, I speak to all ranks of persons. O noblemen, who are the high mountains of this kingdom, bow your tops, and look on the kirk of Christ, lying in the vallies, sighing, groaning, swooning and looking towards you with pitiful looks: if the Sun of Righteousness hath shined on you, let her have a shadow, as ye would have God to be a shadow to you in the day of your distress.

Barons and gentlemen, who are as the pleasant hills coming from the mountains (I speak to you for the relation that is betwixt you and the mountains, for by your descent ye are hewn out of the mountains) my heart is glad to see you lift your tops, as the palms of your hands reached to the mountains, that they and ye may be as a shelter for the kirk of Christ. I pray you separate not your hands from theirs, till our work be brought forth with shouting.

Burrows (Burghs), who are as the vallies God hath blessed with the fatness of the earth, and the merchandise of the sea; the mountains and hills are looking to you, and ye to them: join yourselves in an inseparable union, and compass the vineyard of Christ; be to her a wall of defence, lest the wild beasts of the wood waste it, and the wild beasts of the forest devour it.

Ministers, and my faithful brethren in Christ, whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains, say unto Zion, "Behold thy God reigneth." I tell you, within these two years, an honest man's feet were not beautiful upon the streets of Edinburgh. We might have gone home to our houses again, and shaken the dust off our feet for a conviction against this unthankful generation; but now (God be praised) they are beautiful, and we are comely in their eyes, not for any thing in us, for we lay all down at the feet of Christ; but because we are gone up upon mount Zion, and as the Lord's messengers, have cried, "Behold thy God reigneth." I pray you, if ye have any love to the kirk of Christ, withdraw both your tongues and pens from this

mountain, and apply them against it; apply your wits, engines, spirits, and all your strength to beat down this mountain; yea, tread upon it, and use the sharp threshing instruments which God hath put into your hands, and thresh upon that mountain till it be beaten small as the chaff.

Shall I pass you that are commons? Truly my delight hath not been so great upon this mountain, as to make me overlook you. My good people, beloved in Christ, have ye nothing to contribute for this work? Have ye not so much power as the mountains and hills have? Or, have ye not such substance as the vallies? Yet something ye have, give it, and it will be acceptable, something against the mountain, and something for the work. If ye have no more against the mountain, let me have your tears, prayers, and strong cries; I am sure there is as great value in them, as in the rams' horns that blew down Jericho: send up your prayers, and cry with the Psalmist, "Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down, touch the mountains, and they shall smoke: cast forth lightning, and scatter them; shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them; send thine hand from above, and deliver me out of the great waters, from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." As ye have your tears and prayers against this mountain, lend me also what ye have for the going up of this work: if ye have no more, let us have your shouts and hearty crying, "grace, grace be unto it." Time will not suffer me to speak any more, yet time shall never bereave you or me of this. Let us all resolve so long as our life is in, even to the last gasp, as God will help us, that this shall be our last cry, Grace, grace be unto this work of reformation in the kirk of Scotland.

To this grace I recommend you, and close with that wish of the Apostles in the New Testament. *The grace of God be with you all.* Amen.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

St. Margarets and the Abbey, Westminster.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT:

For Reformation and Defence of Religion, the Honour and Happiness of the King, and the Peace and Safety of the Three Kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland; agreed upon by Commissioners from the Parliament and Assembly of Divines in England, with Commissioners of the Convention of Estates, and General Assembly in Scotland; approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and by both Houses of Parliament and Assembly of Divines in England, and taken and subscribed by them, Anno 1643; *and thereafter, by the said authority, taken and subscribed by all Ranks in Scotland and England the same year; and ratified by the Act of Parliament of Scotland,* Anno 1644: *And again renewed in Scotland, with an Acknowledgment of Sins, and Engagment to Duties, by all Ranks,* Anno 1648, *and by Parliament* 1649; *and taken and subscribed by* King Charles II. at Spey, June 23, 1650; and at Scoon, January 1, 1651.

We Noblemen, Barons, Knights, Gentlemen, Citizens, Burgesses, Ministers of the Gospel, and Commons of all sorts in the kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland, by the providence of GOD, living under one King, and being of one reformed religion, having before our eyes the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the honour and happiness of the King's Majesty and his posterity, and the true publick liberty, safety, and peace of the kingdoms, wherein every one's private condition is included: And calling to mind the treacherous and bloody plots, conspiracies, attempts, and practices of the enemies of GOD, against the true religion and professors thereof in all places,

especially in these three kingdoms, ever since the reformation of religion; and how much their rage, power, and presumption are of late, and at this time, increased and exercised, whereof the deplorable state of the church and kingdom of Ireland, the distressed estate of the church and kingdom of England, and the dangerous estate of the church and kingdom of Scotland, are present and public testimonies; we have now at last, (after other means of supplication, remonstrance, protestation, and sufferings,) for the preservation of ourselves and our religion from utter ruin and destruction, according to the commendable practice of these kingdoms in former times, and the example of GOD'S people in other nations, after mature deliberation, resolved and determined to enter into a mutual and solemn League and Covenant, wherein we all subscribe, and each one of us for himself, with our hands lifted up to the most High GOD, do swear,

I. THAT we shall sincerely, really, and constantly, through the grace of GOD, endeavour, in our several places and callings, the preservation of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government against our common enemies; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the Word of GOD, and the example of the best reformed Churches: and shall endeavour to bring the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of church-government, directory for worship and catechising; that we, and our posterity after us, may, as brethren, live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.

II. That we shall, in like manner, without respect of persons

endeavour the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, (that is, church-government by Archbishops, Bishops, their Chancellors, and Commissaries, Deans, Deans and Chapters, Archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical Officers depending on hierarchy,) superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness, lest we partake in other men's sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues; and that the Lord may be one, and His name one, in the three Kingdoms.

III. We shall, with the same sincerity, reality, and constancy, in our several vocations, endeavour, with our estates and lives, mutually to preserve the rights and privileges of the Parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdoms; and to preserve and defend the King's Majesty's person and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true religion, and liberties of the kingdoms; that the world may bear witness with our consciences of our loyalty, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminish his Majesty's just power and greatness.

IV. We shall also, with all faithfulness, endeavour the discovery of all such as have been or shall be incendiaries, malignants, or evil instruments, by hindering the reformation of religion, dividing the king from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or making any faction or parties amongst the people, contrary to this League and Covenant; that they may be brought to public trial, and receive condign punishment, as the degree of their offences shall require or deserve, or the supreme judicatories of both kingdoms respectively, or others having power from them for that effect, shall judge convenient.

V. And whereas the happiness of a blessed peace between these kingdoms, denied in former times to our progenitors,

is, by the good providence of GOD, granted unto us, and hath been lately concluded and settled by both Parliaments; we shall each one of us, according to our place and interest, endeavour that they may remain conjoined in a firm peace and union to all posterity; and that justice may be done upon the wilful opposers thereof, in manner expressed in the precedent article.

VI. We shall also, according to our places and callings, in this common cause of religion, liberty, and peace of the kingdoms, assist and defend all those that enter into this League and Covenant, in the maintaining and pursuing thereof; and shall not suffer ourselves, directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, persuasion, or terror, to be divided and withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give ourselves to a detestable indifferency or neutrality in this cause which so much concerneth the glory of GOD, the good of the kingdom, and honour of the King; but shall, all the days of our lives, zealously and constantly continue therein against all opposition, and promote the same, according to our power, against all lets and impediments whatsoever; and, what we are not able ourselves to suppress or overcome, we shall reveal and make known, that it may be timely prevented or removed: All which we shall do as in the sight of God.

And, because these kingdoms are guilty of many sins and provocations against GOD, and His Son JESUS CHRIST, as is too manifest by our present distresses and dangers, the fruits thereof; we profess and declare, before GOD and the world, our unfeigned desire to be humbled for our own sins, and for the sins of these kingdoms; especially, that we have not as we ought valued the inestimable benefit of the Gospel; that we have not laboured for the purity and power thereof; and that we have not endeavoured to receive CHRIST in our

hearts, nor to walk worthy of Him in our lives; which are the causes of other sins and transgressions so much abounding amongst us: and our true and unfeigned purpose, desire, and endeavour for ourselves, and all others under our power and charge, both in public and in private, in all duties we owe to GOD and man, to amend our lives, and each one to go before another in the example of a real reformation; that the Lord may turn away His wrath and heavy indignation, and establish these churches and kingdoms in truth and peace. And this Covenant we make in the presence of ALMIGHTY GOD, the Searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to perform the same, as we shall answer at that great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed; most humbly beseeching the LORD to strengthen us by His HOLY SPIRIT for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings with such success, as may be deliverance and safety to His people, and encouragement to other Christian churches, groaning under, or in danger of, the yoke of antichristian tyranny, to join in the same or like association and covenant, to the glory of GOD, the enlargement of the kingdom of JESUS CHRIST, and the peace and tranquility of Christian kingdoms and commonwealths.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

ACT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

At Edinburgh, August 17th, 1643, *Sess.* 14.

The Assembly having recommended unto a committee, appointed by them to join with the committee of the honourable Convention of Estates, and the commissioners of the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, for bringing the kingdoms to a more near conjunction and union, received from the aforesaid committees the covenant after-mentioned, as the result of their consultations: and having taken the same, as a matter of so public concernment and of so deep importance doth require, unto their gravest consideration, did with all their hearts, and with the beginnings of the feelings of that joy, which they did find in so great measure upon the renovation of the National Covenant of this kirk and kingdom, all with one voice approve and embrace the same, as the most powerful mean, by the blessing of God, for the settling and preserving the true protestant religion, with perfect peace in his majesty's dominions, and propagating the same to other nations, and for establishing his majesty's throne to all ages and generations. And therefore, with their best affections, recommended the same to the Hon. Convention of Estates,

that being examined and approved by them, it may be sent with all diligence to the kingdom of England, that being received and approven there, the same may be, with public humiliation, and all religious and answerable solemnity, sworn and subscribed by all true professors of the reformed religion, and all his majesty's good subjects in both kingdoms.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

EXHORTATION AT WESTMINSTER.

*BY PHILIP NYE.**

A GREAT and solemn work (Honourable and Reverend) this day is put into our hands; let us stir up and awaken our hearts unto it. We deal with God as well as with men, and with God in His greatness and excellency, for by Him we swear; and at the same time we have to do with God and His goodness, Who now reacheth out unto us a strong and seasonable arm of assistance. The goodness of God procuring succour and help to a sinful and afflicted people (such are we) ought to be matter of fear and trembling, even to all that hear of it. We are to exalt and acknowledge Him this day, Who is fearful in praises, swear by that name which is holy and reverend, enter into a covenant and league that is never to be forgotten by us nor our posterity, and the fruit I hope of it shall be so great, as both we and they shall have cause to remember it with joy; and such an oath as for matter, persons, and other circumstances, the like hath not been in any age or oath we read of in sacred or human history, yet sufficiently warranted in both.

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* Mr. Nye was an Independent and a distinguished member of the Westminster Assembly. This Exhortation was given to the House of Commons and the "Reverend Divines" of the Westminster Assembly before they took the Solemn League and Covenant, and was published by order of the House of Commons.

The parties engaging in this league, are three kingdoms, famous for the knowledge and acknowledgment of Christ above all the kingdoms in the world; to swear before such a presence should mould the spirit of man into a great deal of reverence. What then to be engaged, to be incorporated, and that by sacred oath, with such an high and honourable fraternity? An oath is to be esteemed so much the more solemn, by how much greater the persons are that swear each to other; so in this business, where kingdoms swear mutually.

And as the solemnity of an oath is to be measured by the persons swearing, so by the matter also that is to be sworn to. God would not swear to the covenant of Works, He intended not to honour it so much, it was not to continue, it was not worthy of an oath of His; but to the Covenant of Grace, which is the Gospel, He swears, and repents not of it. God swears for the salvation of men, and of kingdoms: and if kingdoms swear, what subject of an oath becometh them better than the preservation and salvation of kingdoms, by establishing the kingdom of a Saviour amongst them, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who is a Mediator and Saviour for nations as well as particular persons?

The end also is great and honourable, as either of the former. "Two are better than one," saith He, Who knoweth what is best, and from Whom alone every thing hath the goodness it hath. Association is of divine offspring; not only the being of creatures, but the putting of them together. The cluster as well as the grape is the work of God. Consort and harmony amongst men, especially amongst saints, is very pleasing unto the Lord. If, when but two or three agree and assent upon any thing on earth, it shall be confirmed in heaven, and for this, because they gather together in His name; much more when two or three kingdoms shall meet, and consent together in His name, and for His name, that God "may be one, and His name one

amongst them," and His presence amidst them. That prayer of Christ seemeth to proceed from a feeling sense of His own blessedness, "Father, that they may be one, as Thou in Me." Unity among His churches and children must needs therefore be very acceptable unto Him: for out of the more deep sense desires are fetcht from within us, the more pleasing will be the answer of them unto us. Churches and kingdoms are near to God, His patience towards them, His compassions over them more than particular persons sheweth it plainly. But kingdoms willingly engaging themselves for His kingdom, His Christ, His saints, the purity of religion, His worship and government, in all particulars, and in all humility sitting down at His feet to receive the law, and the rule from His mouth: what a price doth He set upon such? Especially, when (as we this day) sensible of our infirmity, and of an unfaithful heart not steady with our God, but apt to start from the cause, if we feel the knife or the fire; who bind ourselves with cords, as a sacrifice to the horns of the altar; we invocate the name of the great God, that His vows, yea, His curse may be upon us, if we do not this; yea, though we suffer for so doing, that is, if we endeavour not so far as the Lord shall assist us by His grace, to advance the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ here upon earth, and make Jerusalem once more the praise of the whole world, notwithstanding all the contradictions of men.

What is this but the contents and matter of our oath? What do we covenant? What do we vow? Is it not the preservation of religion, where it is reformed, and the reformation of religion, where it needs? Is it not the reformation of three kingdoms, and a reformation universal, in doctrine, discipline, and worship, in whatsoever the word shall discover unto us? To practise is a fruit of love; to reform, a fruit of zeal: but so to reform, will be a token of great prudence and circumspection in each of

these churches: and all this to be done according to God's word, the best rule, and according to the best reformed churches, and best interpreters of this rule. If England hath obtained to any greater perfection in so handling the word of righteousness, and truths that are according to godliness, as to make men more godly, more righteous: and, if in the churches of Scotland any more light and beauty in matters of order and discipline, by which their assemblies are more orderly: or, if to any other church or person, it hath been given better to have learned Christ in any of His ways, than any of us, we shall humbly bow, and kiss their lips that can speak right words unto us, in this matter, and help us into the nearest uniformity with the word and mind of Christ in this great work of Reformation.

Honourable and reverend brethren, there cannot be a more direct and effectual way to exhort and persuade the wise, and men of sad and serious spirits (and such are you to whom I am commanded to speak this day) than to let into their understandings the weight, and worth, and great importance of the work, they are persuaded unto. This oath is such, and, in the matter and consequence of it, of such concernment, as I can truly say, It is worthy of us; yea, of all these kingdoms; yea, of all the kingdoms of the world; for it is swearing fealty and allegiance unto Christ, the King of kings; and giving up of all these kingdoms which are in His inheritance, to be subdued more to His throne, and ruled more by His sceptre, upon whose shoulders the government is laid, and "of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end." Yea, we find this very thing in the utmost accomplishment of it, to have been the oath of the greatest angel that ever was, who setting his feet upon two of God's kingdoms, the one upon the sea, the other upon the earth, lifting up his hand to heaven, as you are to do this day, and so swearing. The effect of that oath you shall find to be this, "That the

kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of the Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign forever." His oath was for the full and final accomplishment, this of yours for a gradual, yet a great performance towards it.

That which the apostles and primitive times did so much and so long pray for, tho' never long with much quietness enjoyed; that which our fathers in these latter times have fasted, prayed and mourned after, yet attained not; even the cause which many dear saints now with God, have furthered by extremest sufferings, poverty, imprisonment, banishment, death, even ever since the first dawning of reformation: that and the very same is the very cause and work that we are come now, through the mercy of Jesus Christ, not only to pray for, but swear to. And surely it can be no other, but the result and answer of such prayers and tears, of such sincerity and sufferings, that three kingdoms should be thus born, or rather new-born in a day; that these kingdoms should be wrought about to so great an engagement, than which nothing is higher. For this end kings reign, kingdoms stand, and states are upheld.

It is a special grace and favour of God unto you, brethren, (Reverend and Honourable) to vouchsafe you the opportunity, and to put into your hearts, as this day, to engage your lives and estates in matters so much concerning Him and His glory. And if you should do no more, but lay a foundation stone in this great work, and by so doing engage posterity after you to finish it, it were honour enough: but there may yet further use be made of you, who now are to take this oath. You are designed as chief master-builders, and choice instruments for the effecting of this settled peace and reformation; which, if the Lord shall please to finish in your hands, a greater happiness on earth, nor a greater means to augment your glory and crown in heaven, you are not capable of. And this, let me further add for your encouragement, of what extensive good, and fruit in the

success of it, this very oath may prove to be, we know not. God hath set His covenant like the heavens, not only for duration, but like also for extension. The heavens move and roll about, and so communicate their light, and heat, and virtue, to all places and parts of the earth; so doth the covenant of God; so may this gift be given to other covenants, that are framed to this pattern. How much this solemn league and oath may provoke other reformed churches to a further reformation of themselves; what light and heat it may communicate abroad to other parts of the world, it is only in Him to define, to whom is given the utmost ends of the earth for His inheritance, and worketh by His exceeding great power great things out of small beginnings.

But however, this I am sure of, it is a way in all probability most likely to enable us to preserve and defend our religion against our common enemies; and possibly a more sure foundation this day will be laid for ruining popery and prelacy, the chief of them, than yet hath been led unto in any age. For popery hath been a religion ever dexterous in fencing and mounting itself by association and joint strength. All sorts of professors amongst them are cast into fraternities and brother-hoods; and these orders carefully united by vow one with another, and under some more general notion of common dependence. Such states also and kingdoms, as they have thus made theirs, they endeavour to improve and secure by strict combinations and leagues each to other; witness of late years that *la sainte ligue*, the holy league. It will not be unworthy your consideration, whether, seeing the preservation of popery hath been by leagues and covenant, God may not make a league or covenant to be the destruction of it. Nay, the very rise of popery seemeth to be after such a manner, by kings, that is kingdoms assenting and agreeing perhaps by some joint covenant (the text saith, "with one mind," why not then

with one mouth) to give their power and strength unto the beast, and make war against the Lamb. For you read, "the Lamb shall overcome the beast," and possibly with the same weapons. He is the Lord of lords, and King of kings, He can unite kings and kingdoms, and give them one mind also to destroy the whore, and be her utter ruin. And may not this day's work be a happy beginnning of such a blessed expedition?

Prelacy, another common enemy, that we covenant and swear against. What hath been, or what hath the strength of it been, but a subtile combination of clergymen, formed into a policy or body of their own invention, framing themselves into subordination and dependence one upon another; so that the interest of each is improved by all, and a great power by this means acquired to themselves, as by sad experience we have lately found The joints and members of this body, you know, were knit together by the sacred engagement of an oath, the *Oath of Canonical Obedience*, as they called it. You remember also, with what cunning industry they endeavoured lately, to make this oath and covenant more sure for themselves and their posterity, and intended a more public, solemn and universal engagement, than since Popery, this cause of theirs, was ever maintained or supported by: and questionless, Ireland and Scotland also must at last have been brought into this holy league with England. But blessed be the Lord, and blessed be His good hand, the parliament that, from the indignation of their spirits against so horrid a yoke, have dashed out the very brains of this project, and are now this day present before the Lord, to take and give possession of this blessed ordinance, even an oath and covenant, as solemn, and of as large extent, as they intended theirs; uniting these three kingdoms into such a league and happy combination, as will doubtless preserve us and our reformation against them, though their iniquity, in the mysteries of it, should still be

working amongst us. Come, therefore (I speak in the words of the prophet) "let us join ourselves to the Lord," and one to another, and each to all, "in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."

We are now entering upon a work of the greatest moment and concernment to us, and to our posterity after us, that ever was undertaken by any of us, or any of our forefathers before us, or neighbouring nations about us; if the Lord shall bless this our beginning, it will be a happy day, and we shall be a happy people. An oath is a duty of the first commandment, and therefore of the highest and noblest order and rank of duties, therefore must come forth attended with choicest graces, especially with these two, humility and fear.

Fear, not only of God, which ought to be in an eminent measure. Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac, as if he coveted to inherit his father's grace, as well as his father's God: but also, fear of an oath, it being a dreadful duty, and hath this peculiar, it is established by the oath of God, "I have sworn, that unto Me every tongue shall swear." It is made the very character of a saint, he fears an oath.

Humility is another grace requisite. Set your hearts before God in an humble obedient frame. "Thou shall fear the Lord thy God, and serve Him, and swear by His name." The apostle Paul was sensible of this engagement, even in the very act of this duty. "I call God to witness, whom I serve in my spirit:" although it be a work of the lips, yet the heart, and the whole man must be interested, if we expect this worship to be acceptable. "Accept the free-will offering of my mouth, and teach me Thy judgments."

Also it must be done in the greatest simplicity and plainness of spirit, in respect of those with whom we covenant; we call God as a witness betwixt us, who searcheth the heart: "With Him is wisdom and strength, the deceived and deceiver are His." He hath wisdom to discover, and

strength to punish, if our hearts be not upright to our brethren in this matter. Let us be contented with this, that the words of our covenant be bands; it may not be, so much as in the desire of our hearts, that they should become snares, no not to the weakest and simplest person that joineth with us. On the whole work make your address unto God, as Jacob did to his father Isaac, and let there be the like fear and jealousy over your spirits. "My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to Him as a deceiver, and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing."

I take liberty with more earnestness to press this care upon you, because I have observed oaths and covenants have been undertaken by us formerly, and by the command of authority, the fruit whereof, though great, yet answered not our expectation; the Lord surely hath been displeased with the slightness of our hearts in the work. I beseech you be more watchful, and stir up your hearts with more industry this day than ever before. As it is the last oath you are likely to take in this kind, so it is our last refuge, *Tabula post naufragium*. If this help us not, we are likely to remain to our dying day an unhappy people; but if otherwise, "You will indeed swear with all your hearts, and seek the Lord with your whole desire, God will be found, and give you rest round about."

And having sworn, and entered into this solemn engagement to God and man, make conscience to do accordingly; otherwise it is better thou shouldst not vow. As is said of fasting, "It is not the bowing down of the head for a day;" so of this solemn swearing, It is not the lifting up of the hand for a day, but an honest and faithful endeavouring after the contents of this covenant, all our days. A truce-breaker is reckoned up amongst the vilest of Christians, so a covenant-breaker is listed amongst the worst of heathens. But he that sweareth and changeth not, tho' he swear to his hurt, that is, he that will keep his covenant

and oath, tho' the contents of it prove not for him, nay possibly against him, yet he will keep it for his oath's sake, such an one "shall have his habitation with the most High, and dwell in His tabernacle." And as for you, reverend brethren, that are ministers of the gospel, there is yet another obligation will lie upon you: let us look to ourselves, and make provision to walk answerable to this our covenant, for the gospel's sake: it will reflect a great aspersion upon the truth of the gospel, if we should be false or inconstant in any word or purpose, tho' in a matter of less consequence, as you can easily collect from that apology of Paul. How much more in such a case as this is, if we should be found to purpose, nay more, to vow, and covenant, and swear, and all this according unto the flesh, and with us there should be, notwithstanding all these obligations, yea, yea, and nay, nay.

That we may all, who take the covenant this day, be constant, immoveable, and abound in this work of the Lord, that we may not start aside, or give back, or go on uncomfortably, there is a twofold grace or qualification to be laboured after.

1. We must get courage, spirits that are bold and resolute. It is said in Haggai, that "the Lord stirred up the Spirit of Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people, and they came and did work in the house of the Lord." The work of God's house, reformation work especially, is a stirring work: read history, you find not any where, reformation made in any age, either in doctrine or discipline, without great stir and opposition. This was foretold by the same prophet, the promise is, "He will fill His house with glory." But what goeth before. "Yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land," that is, all nations, as in the words following. This place is

applied to the removing Jewish rites, the moveables of God's house. The like you find in the apostles' times, the truth being preached, some believed, others did not. Here beginneth the stir. Those that believed not, "took unto themselves certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar;" and when they had done so, complained of the brethren to the rulers, as men that turn the world upside down. In such a work therefore, men had need be of stout, resolute and composed spirits, that we may be able to go on in the main, and stir in the midst of such stirs, and not be amazed at any such doings. It may possibly happen, that even amongst yourselves, there will be outcries: Sir, you will undo all, saith one; You will put all into confusion, saith another; If you take this course, saith a third, we can expect nothing but blood. But a wise statesman, like an experienced seaman, knoweth the compass of his vessel, and tho' it heave, toss, and the passengers cry out about him, yet in the midst of all, he is himself, turneth not aside from his work, but steereth on his course. I beseech you, let it be seriously considered, if you mean to do any such work in the house of God, as this is; if you mean to pluck up what many years ago was planted, or to build up what so long ago was pulled down, and to go thro' with this work and not be discouraged, you must beg of the Lord this excellent spirit, this resolute, stirring spirit, otherwise you will be outspirited, and both you and your cause slighted and dishonoured.

2. On the other hand, we must labour for humility, prudence, gentleness, meekness. A man may be very zealous and resolute, and yet very meek and merciful: Jesus Christ was a Lion, and yet a Lamb also; in one place, He telleth them He cometh to send "fire on the earth:" and, in another place, rebuketh His disciples "for their fiery spirits." There was the like composition in

Moses, and in Paul; and it is of great use, especially in this work of reformation. I have not observed any disputes carried on with more bitterness in men's writings, and with a more unsanctified heat of spirit, yea, and by godly men too, than in controversies about discipline, church government, ceremonies, and the like. Surely, to argue about government with such ungoverned passions, to argue for reformation with a spirit so unreformed, is very uncomely. Let us be zealous, as Christ was, to cast out all, to extirpate and root out every plant His heavenly Father hath not planted; and yet let us do it in an orderly way, and with the Spirit of Christ, whose servants we are. "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose." We solemnly engage this day our utmost endeavours for reformation; let us remember this, that too much heat, as well as too much coldness, may harden men in their ways, and hinder reformation.

Brethren, let us come to this blessed work with such a frame of heart, with such a mind, for the present, with such resolutions for the time to come; let us not be wanting to the opportunity God hath put into our hands this day; and then I can promise you, as the prophet, "Consider this day and upwards, even from this day, that the foundation of the Lord's work is laid, consider it, from this day will I bless you saith the Lord." Nay, we have received, as it were, the first fruits of this promise; for, as it is said of some men's good "works, they are manifest before-hand." Even so may be said of the good work of this day, it is manifested before-hand. God hath, as it were before-hand, testified His acceptance; while we were thinking and purposing this free-will offering, He was protecting and defending our army, causing our enemies, the enemies of this work, to flee before us, and gave us a victory, not to be despised. Surely this oath and covenant shall be Judah's joy, the

joy and comfort of this whole kingdom, yea, of all the three kingdoms.

Jesus Christ, King of the saints, govern us by His Spirit, strengthen us by His power, undertake for us according as He hath sworn, even the "oath which He sware to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life." Grant unto us also, that when this life is finished, and we gathered to our fathers, there may be a generation out of our loins to stand up in this cause, that His great and reverend name may be exalted from one generation to another, until He Himself shall come, and perfect all His own wisdom: even so come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

ADDRESS AT WESTMINSTER.*

BY ALEXANDER HENDERSON.

ALTHOUGH the time be far spent, yet am I bold (honourable, reverend, and beloved in the Lord) to crave your patience a little. It were both sin and shame to us in this so acceptable a time in this day, which the Lord hath made, to be silent and to say nothing. If we should hold our peace, we could neither be answerable to God, whose cause and work is in hand, nor to this church and kingdom, unto which we have made so large profession of duty, and owe much more; nor to our native kingdom, so abundant in affection towards you; nor to our own hearts, which exceedingly rejoice to see this day. We have greater reason than the leprous men sitting in a time of great extremity at the gates of Samaria, to say one to another, "We do not well, this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace." It is true, the Syrians are not yet fled; but our hope is through God, that the work begun this day, being sincerely performed, and faithfully pursued, shall put to flight, not only the Syrians and Babylonians, but all other enemies of the church of God, of the king's honour, and of our liberty and peace.

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* This Address was given to the House of Commons and the Westminster Assembly before taking the Covenant and was published by order of the House of Commons.

For it is acceptable to God, and well pleasing in His sight, when His people come willingly in the day of His power (and how shall they not be willing in the day of His power?) to enter into a religious covenant with Him, and amongst themselves, whatsoever be the condition of the people of God, whether in sorrow and humiliation before deliverance, or in rejoicing and thanksgiving after deliverance. This is it which the Lord waits for at their hands, which they have been used to perform, and with which He hath been so well pleased, that it hath been the fountain of many deliverances and blessings unto them. When a people begin to forget God, He lifteth up His hand against them, and smiteth them: and when His people, humbled before Him, lift up their hands, not only in supplication, but in covenant before the most high God, He is pleased (such is His mercy and wonderful compassion) first, to lift His hand unto them, saying, "I am the Lord your God:" as we have it three times in two verses of the 20th of Ezekiel: and next He stretcheth out His hand against His enemies and theirs. It is the best work of faith, to join in covenant with God, the best work of love and Christian communion, to join in covenant with the people of God: the best work of the best zeal, to join in covenant for reformation, against the enemies of God and religion; the best work of true loyalty, to join in covenant for the preservation of our king and superiors; and the best proof of natural affection, (and to be without natural affection is one of the great sins of the Gentiles) to join in covenant for defence of our native country, liberties and laws: such as from these necessary ends do withdraw, and are not willing to enter into covenant, have reason to enter into their own hearts, and to look into their faith, love, zeal, loyalty, and natural affection.

As it is acceptable to God, so have we for it the precedent and example not only of the people of God of old, of the

reformed churches of Germany, and the low countries; but of our own noble and Christian progenitors in the time of the danger of religion, which is expressed in the covenant itself. The defect was, they went not on thoroughly to enter into a solemn covenant, an happiness reserved for this time, which had they done, the corruptions and calamities of these days might have been prevented. And if the Lord shall be pleased to move, loose, and enlarge the hearts of His people in his majesty's dominions to take this covenant, not in simulation, nor in luke-warmness, as those that are almost persuaded to be Christians, but as becometh the people of God, it shall be the prevention of many evils and miseries, and a means of many and rich blessings, spiritual and temporal, to ourselves, our little ones, and the posterity that shall come after us, for many generations.

The near and neighbouring example of the church and kingdom of Scotland, is in this case worthy of our best observation. When the prelates there were grown by their rents, and lordly dignities, by their exorbitant power over all sorts of his majesty's subjects, ministers and others, by their places in parliament, council, college of justice, exchequer, and high commission, to a monstrous dominion and greatness, and, like giants, setting their one foot on the neck of the church, and the other on the neck of the state, were become intolerably insolent. And when the people of God, through their oppression in religion, liberties and laws, and what was dearest unto them, were brought so low, that they choose rather to die, than to live in such slavery, or to live in any other place, rather than in their own native country: then did the Lord say, "I have seen the affliction of My people, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them." The beginnings were small and contemptible in the eyes of the presumptuous enemies, such as used to be the beginnings of the greatest works of God; but were so seconded and continually

followed by the undeniable evidences of divine providence, leading them forward from one step to another, that their mountain became strong in the end. No tongue can tell what motions filled the hearts, what tears were poured forth from the eyes, and what cries came from the mouths of many thousands in that land, when they found an unwonted flame warming their breasts, and perceived the power of God, raising them from the dead, and creating for them a new world, wherein shall dwell religion and righteousness. When they were destitute both of monies and munition, which, next unto the spirit and arms of men, are the sinews of war, the Lord brought them forth out of His hid treasures, which was wonderful in their eyes, and matter of astonishment to their hearts: when they were many times at a pause in their deliberations, and brought to such perplexity, that they knew not what to choose, or to do for prosecuting the work of God, only their eyes were towards Him; not only the fears and furies, but the plots also and policies of the adversaries opened the way unto them, their devices were turned upon their own heads, and served for promoting of the work of God. The purity of their intentions elevated above base and earthly respects, and the constant peace of their hearts in the midst of many dangers, did bear them out against the malicious accusations and aspersions put upon their actions: all which were sensible impressions of the good providence of God, and legible characters of His work; which the church and kingdom of England, exercised at this time with greater difficulty than theirs, have in part already found; so shall the parallel be perfected to their greater comfort in the faithful pursuing of the work unto the end.

Necessity, which hath in it a kind of sovereignty, and is a law above all laws, and therefore is said to have no law, doth mightily press the church and kingdom of Scotland at this time. It is no small comfort unto them, that they have

not been idle, and at ease, but have used all good and lawful means of supplications, declarations and remonstrances to his majesty, for quenching the combustion in this kingdom: and after all these, that they sent commissioners to his majesty, humbly to mediate for a reconcilement and pacification. But the offer of their humble service was rejected from no other reason, but that they had no warrant nor capacity for such a mediation; and that the intermixture of the government of the church of England, with the civil government of the kingdom, was such a mystery as could not be understood by them. Although it be true, which was at that time often replied, that the eighth demand of the treaty, and the answer given thereunto, concerning the uniformity of religion, was a sufficient ground of capacity; and the proceedings of the houses of parliament against episcopal government, as a stumbling block hindering reformation, and as a prejudice to the civil state, was ground enough for their information. The commissioners having returned from his majesty without success, and the miseries of Ireland, and the distresses of England, and the dangers and pressures of the kingdom of Scotland, growing to greater extremity; such as were intrusted with the public affairs of the kingdom, were necessitate, according to the practice of former times, his majesty having denied a parliament, to call a convention of the estates, for considering of the present affairs, and for providing the best remedies: which, immediately upon their meeting, by the special providence of God, did receive information of divers treacherous attempts of papists, in all the three kingdoms, as if they had been called for that effect. And by the same providence, commissioners were sent from both houses of parliament, to consider with the estates of the kingdom of Scotland, of such articles and propositions, as might make the conjunction betwixt the two nations more beneficial and effectual for the securing of religion and liberty against papists and prelates, with their

adherents. Their consultations with the commissioners of the General Assembly did in the end bring forth a covenant, as the only means after all other had been essayed, for the deliverance of England and Ireland out of the depths of affliction, preservation of the church and kingdom of Scotland from the extremity of misery, and the safety of our native king and his kingdoms, from destruction and desolation. This is the manifold necessity which nature, religion, loyalty and love hath laid upon them.

Nor is it unknown in this honourable, reverend and wise audience, what errors and heresies in doctrine, what superstition and idolatry in worship, what usurpation and tyranny in government, what cruelty against the souls and bodies of the saints have been set on foot, exercised and executed for many generations, and now of late by the Roman church: all which we hope, through the blessing of God upon this work, shall be brought to an end. Had the Pope at Rome the knowledge of what is doing this day in England, and were this covenant written on the plaster of the wall over against him, where he sitteth, Belshazzar-like in his sacrilegious pomp, it would make his heart to tremble, his countenance to change, his head and mitre to shake, his joints to loose, and all his cardinals and prelates to be astonished.

When the reformed churches, which by their letters have been exciting us to Christian communion and sympathy, in this time of the danger of religion and distress of the godly, shall hear of this blessed conjunction for uniformity in religion, according to the Word of God, and the defence thereof, it shall quicken their hearts against the heaviness of oppressing sorrows and fears: and be no other than a beginning of a jubilee and joyful deliverance unto them, from the antichristian yoke and tyranny.

Upon these and the like considerations, we are very confident that the church and kingdom of Scotland will

most cheerfully join in this covenant; at the first motion whereof, their bowels were moved within them. And to give testimony of this our confidence, we who are Commissioners from the General Assembly, although we have no particular and express commission for that end (not from want of willingness, but of foresight) offer to join our hearts and hands unto it, being assured, that the Lord in His own time will, against all opposition, even against the gates of hell, crown it with a blessing from heaven. The Word of God is for it, as you have been now resolved by the consent and testimony of a reverend assembly of so many godly, learned and great divines. In your own sense and experience, upon seeking God in private or public, as in the evening of a well spent Sabbath or day of fast and humiliation, the bent and inclinations of your hearts will be strongest to go through with this work. It is a good testimony that our designs and ways are agreeable to the will of God, if we affect them most when our hearts are farthest from the world, and our temper is most spiritual and heavenly, and least carnal and earthly. As the Word of God, so the prayers of the people of God in all the reformed churches, are for us. That divine providence also which hath maintained this cause, and supported His servants in a marvellous manner unto this day, and which this time past hath kept things in an equal balance and vicissitude of success, will, we trust, from this day forth, through the weight of this covenant, cast the balance, and make religion and righteousness to prevail, to the glory of God, the honour of our king, the confusion of our common enemies, and the comfort and safety of the people of God; which, may He grant who is able to do above any thing that we can ask or think.

Fac-simile of old Title page of following Sermon.

The Heart's Engagement.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

St. *Margaret's Westminster,*

At the publick ENTERING into the

COVENANT,

BY

I. *Some of the Nobility, Knighthood and Gentry.*
II. *Divers Colonels, Officers and Soldiers.*
III. *Those of the* Scotish *Nation about the City.*
IV *Many Reverend Divines here residing.*

September 29*th*, Anno 1643.

By the Reverend Mr. THOMAS COLEMAN, one of the Members of the *Westminster* Assembly of *Divines.*

Preached and published according to the several Orders of the Honourable House of COMMONS.

NEHEM x. 28, 29. *The people ---- entred into a curse, and into an oath to walk in God's law,* &c.

GLASGOW,
Printed for GEORGE PATON, Book-seller in *Linlithgow.* MDCCXLI.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

SERMON AT WESTMINSTER.

BY THOMAS COLEMAN.

"For who is this, that engaged his heart to approach unto Me, saith the Lord?"—*Jerem.* xxx. 21.

Two things in this clause cause some obscurity: *First*, The uncertainty of the subject. *Second*, The ambiguity of one phrase.

1. The uncertainty of the subject, or person of whom the prophet speaks here: whether of Christ, by way of prophecy, or of some particular person, by way of story, or indefinitely of every one, by way of duty.

2. The ambiguity of that phrase, *engaged;* which, according to the variety of its signification, is or may be variously rendered. *He adorned His heart; He applied His heart; He directed His heart; He engaged His heart.*

Hereupon the sense becomes various.

1. Who is he, *viz.* Christ, hath appointed his heart? Can there be found a parallel to Christ in the world, that hath so given himself up to God? made Him and His ways his meat and drink, yea more than his ordinary food?

2. Who hath fitted and adorned his heart? Is there any that can adorn and prepare himself to approach unto God, without God?

3. To omit others of like nature: it may be true, that it

is chiefly spoken of Christ: the titles in the beginning of the verse look this way; his noble One, his Ruler; but seeing Christ is the head of the body, and one with His body, it may secondarily, and by way of communication, be also affirmed of His members; and to them we extend it.

The clause therefore seems dependent, and as it is applied to man, hath reference to that which is an act of God, and seems to be a reason thereof. "I will cause him," saith God, "to draw nigh, and he then shall approach; for who is this that hath engaged his heart?" The force of which inference may look two ways.

1. Shewing the impossibility in man to begin the action: "I will cause him to draw nigh; for who is this, that hath engaged his heart?" Where is the man that can direct his heart, approach to Me of himself, by his own power? Not any, not one: "Without Me you can do nothing"

2. Approving the endeavour to continue: I will cause him to draw near, that he may approach, and stay with Me: he doeth his best, according to his strength: "he engageth his heart," I will help on with the work: "for who is this?" Oh this is an excellent one: there are not many so: that any, that this is so, is beyond expectation, worthy of commendation. What an one is this? "Who is it that hath engaged," tied, bound his heart from starting aside like a broken bow, to approach to, and to continue with Me, saith the Lord?

In the words (to proceed methodically and clearly) I offer the sum of my thoughts, to be considered under four general heads, or parts.

I. The opening of the phrases.
II. The propounding of the point.
III. The viewing of the duty.
IV. The encouragement to the practice.

In and through these we shall walk, as travellers, who speed their pace in those fields which yield no novelties, no

fruit, no delight, but where they meet with varieties to delight the senses, fruitful places, green pastures to refresh themselves and beasts, they rest themselves and bait: so in some of these we shall only take and offer a taste, on others insist, as God shall direct; wherein an engagement of the attentions in the handling to me, may, through God's mercy, beget an engagement of the heart to God in the applying of them in order.

I.—*The opening of the phrases.*

For the fuller understanding of the prophet's drift, three words or phrases in this short sentence are a little to be cleared; for it containeth three parts: 1. An action of piety. 2. The object of this action. 3. The inquiry into both: and these are expressed in so many several particles.

1. The action of piety, engaging the heart. The heart may prove loose and wandering without an engagement: the engagement may be hypocritical and sinister, if it be not of the heart; but the one implying stability, the other sincerity, both together complete it as an action of piety.

2. The object of this action, "to approach unto Me." Sin may be the object pursued, and God may be beheld at a distance: in this, we do not approach; in that, we approach not to God; but either is needful. God abhors those that approach to sin: He minds not those that look to Him at their distance: except then thou approach, and approach unto God, thy endeavour is either cold or cursed.

3. The inquiry into both, who is this? into the act of enagement, because it is not usual, into the part engaged, because it is subtile; and what we seldom see, or groundedly suspect, we have cause to inquire after.

Of the first; this engagement is a degree of the heart's motion towards any object, good and bad; for it was an engagement, though a bad one, when more than forty men bound themselves with an oath from eating and drinking.

till they had killed Paul. To this degree of engagement we ascend by these steps, and the heart of man perfects a motion towards God and good things thus gradually.

1. By an inclination or hankering, a propensity in the mind to this or that: this naturally is evil, and to evil: he that follows his inclination goes wrong, the whole frame of a man's disposition being continually ill-disposed. It is called in scripture the speech or saying of the heart, and used indifferently both of good and bad, yet with a notable mark of diversity in the original, though translations mind it not. Eight times in the Old Testament is this phrase, "Said in his heart," used: four times by the wicked, and as oft by the righteous; but constantly, whensoever a wicked man useth it, as David's fool, Esau, Haman, Satan, it is in his heart; when a good man, as Hannah, David, it is to his heart; and teacheth: 1. That the heart and courses of a wicked man are subject to his inclinations; they dictate to him; they command, and he obeys. 2. But the inclinations of a good man are subject to him; he dictates to them, commands them as things subdued, and fit to be kept under.

Both these different inclinations, different, I say, in respect of subject and object, are strengthened with nothing more than the often reiteration of suitable acts; an evil inclination with evil acts, a good with good. 1. Sin gathereth strength by frequency of committing, and at last becomes as natural as meat or sleep. "By following vanity, they became vain." 2. A good inclination is furthered by good actions; frequency in performance turns to a habit: therefore the Jews, to habituate their heart to mourning, do always, for the space of three days before the memorial of the temple's desolation, in their public meetings, read chapters of mourning; for (say they) three acts make a habit. And hereupon it was: that Israel, above and before other nations, became a blessed people; blessings being

even naturalized upon them by the holiness of the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, immediately succeeding one the other.

2. By a desire, which is an inclination augmented and actuated, carrying on the party to the thing desired, grounded on, or inclined by some external enforcements. This was in Paul, who by that relation to, and interest that he had in, the Thessalonians, endeavoured abundantly with much desire to see their face, which put him to the essay once and again.

3. A purpose, a determination to effect, to accomplish his desire. I have purposed, saith David, "that my mouth shall not transgress," which purposing, before it be taken up, should be well grounded, and, when taken up, not lightly altered. For see, how a change in such a purpose, put the apostle to a serious apology; he was minded to have visited them, he did not; he foresaw they might, they would tax him of lightness, as either not minding, or not being master of his own determinations, and so consequently his ministry, and therein the gospel might be blemished: the fear of which struck his heart, the prevention of which moved his spirit, that both they might be satisfied and himself remain without blame.

4. A resolve, a purpose settled; Daniel was fully resolved, he had laid this charge upon his heart, that he would not defile himself with the king's meat.

5. A tie or obligation, whereby the heart, otherwise shifty, is bound to the work intended, sometime by a single promise, sometime by an oath or vow, and sometime more publicly by a solemn covenant. And this last and highest degree is that which the prophet speaks, at least in this sense I take it. This is that engagement of soul, whereby a man prevents his starting aside: and this is that first phrase that was to be opened.

Of the second; "to approach unto Me."

This is the object, and this approachment is threefold: 1. In his inward man. 2. In his outward man. 3. In both. 1. In his inward man: in heart, by drawing close to God, enjoying a sensible and blessed communion with Him, which is comfortable in such a degree that, where it is felt, it needs no bidding to make an engagement. 2. In his outward man, in his person approaching to God in the practice of all duties commanded: God in His ordinances is powerfully present, man in their use stands within this presence. 3. In both, in all his abilities approaching to Him in managing His holy cause: and therefore holy, because His. God walks in the midst of His people's armies: when thy sons, O Zion, "are armed against thy sons," O Greece, "the Lord God is seen over them." These are those approachings of the saints to their God: the first is their happiness, the second their duty, the third their honour. It is a happy thing to enjoy God's comforts in soul: it is our enjoined duty to obey Him in His ways, and it is an honour to be found standing for the way of righteousness.

Of the third. The inquiry, "who is this?"

Scripture questions are of several uses, hold forth several senses: here it seems to be an approbation of the action spoken of. Who is this? What one is this, that so carefully engageth his heart? This is not ordinary among men, nor of an ordinary degree in man: few move, fewer engage themselves to move towards God. This approbation hath, 1. Its foundation in a duty: I approve this engaging, and the man because he engageth. 2. Its direction from the subject, heart. The engagement of the outward man may have wrong principles: that it may be right, let the heart, soul, inward parts, all that is within us be engaged to bless His holy name. 3. Its limitation from the object, to approach unto me: to engage the heart to sin, to the creature, to vanity, is neither commendable, nor approv-

able; but to close with God, to come to, stay with, and act for Him, this is that which the prophet, and God in the mouth of the prophet ever approves. And this brings us to,

II.—*The propounding of the point, and that in these words.*

God observes with the eye of approbation, such as engage and tie themselves to Him; He looks with an approving eye upon this carefulness: for such an engagement of soul is, 1. Needful. 2. Helpful; needful for the heart, helpful to our graces.

The needfulness is evident. The heart is slow and subtile, backward and deceitful; except it be drawn with the cords of such an engagement, it puts slowly forward; and when thus drawn, it will fall quickly off. Days of desolation beget resolves, times of terror produce engagements, which the heart (the storm past) will wilily and wickedly seek to evade. David suspected this cozenage in himself, when he cries out, Oh! I have many good thoughts, but a naughty heart; many holy purposes, but a deceitful spirit: thou hast cause, as a Creator, not to believe the tender of my obedience, nor as a just God, the promise of submission; but I call to Thy mercy to give assistance. "Be surety for Thy servant for good:" for the performance of all good I promise. And Hezekiah in his sickness was not without fear of this deceitfulness: "Oh Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me;" I shall never keep my word, that word which my lips have spoken; and I have none dare pass his word for me: "do thou, O Lord, undertake for me."

2. The helpfulness is undeniable; a heart from this engagement may fetch renewed strength continually. This engagement is a buckler of defence to arm us against Satan's enticement, is armour of proof to withstand the world's inducement; it makes us without fear or failing stand

upon our own ground, and renew our courage like the eagle. Job was probably sometimes seduced with such foolish persuasions, to courses not less foolish, but he yielded not: what helped him? even his engagement: "I have made a covenant with mine eyes, how then shall I look on a maid?" Constancy in good is well-pleasing to God; "If any draw back, His soul hath no pleasure in them." Whatsoever then is needful for it, or helpful to it, He both prescribes and approves. O let us engage our hearts to this approachment, a duty enjoined, a sacrifice accepted.

But there is one scripture that fully showeth the point, and the truth of it in all particulars. Consider then. Three things may seem necessary herein to be noted; the act, the approbation, and the reason; and here we have them all.

1. The act, engaging; or the persons, the engagers of themselves. Thou hast avouched, set up God this day to be thy God, not only in thy conscience by the act of faith, but even by thy mouth thou hast uttered this, probably in some solemn league and covenant. "Thou hast made to say:" so much the Hebrew word imports.

2. The approbation; and God answers thee accordingly, He hath avouched, set up thee to be His people; particularly to two privileges. 1. To be His peculiar people, the people of His own proper possession, joined so high, united so near, that they are admitted to a participation of many heavenly privileges; the actions of the one being communicated to the other; man's prayer is called God's, "I will make them glad in the house of My prayer," God's people called man's, Moses's people, Moses's law: so in the law of God, and in his law, that is, the righteous man's law. 2. To keep His commands: this seems rather to be a duty than a prerogative, yet a prerogative it is for a Christian to be holy, obedient, righteous: both directly, and accidently. 1. Directly; the scripture teacheth so. The fruit of a Christian's being made free from sin is unto

holiness. "If you will fear the Lord and serve Him" (these are Samuel's words to the people) "and not rebel:" what then? what shall we have? "Then shall you and your king continue to follow the Lord." Solomon, setting down the recompence of a righteous person, saith, his reward shall be double, in himself, and in his posterity; in himself, "he shall walk on in his integrity," in his posterity, "they shall be blessed after him." 2. Accidently: holiness is a privilege, as well as a duty; it is a reward, a benefit to him who walks therein. It may, and oft doth daunt their persecutors, that otherwise would have taken away their lives. The heathens observe that the majestic presence of a prince hath dashed the boldness, and so prevented the execution of some villanous attempt by a base traitor against their persons: and Christians know that the power of holiness is able to dazzle the proudest spirits. Herod, saith the text, "feared John," and so a long while did him no hurt. And the emperor Adrian ceased his persecution against the Christians of his time, when he understood of their holiness of life. So true it is both ways, that the punishment of sin is sin, and the reward of the command is the command.

Both these privileges are again repeated, and further are evidenced in the following verse; "Thou art His peculiar people, therefore will He make thee high above all nations, in praise, name and honour, of more esteem than any; and, thou keepest His commandments, and so He advanceth thee to be a holy people unto the Lord thy God:" all this evidenceth God's approbation of an engaging heart.

3. The reason and ground of God's approving this act, they are two. 1. Because the matter or duties, to which by this bond the heart is tied, are such as God directly observes with an approving eye. The particulars are three here specified, and all elsewhere expressly subjected to this eye of God. *1st.* Thou obligest thyself to walk in His

ways, in the practice of all the duties of the second table; and upon such as depart from evil, and do good, upon such righteous ones, the eyes of the Lord are fastened, not His omniscient eye, but His protecting, blessing eye, that eye the seeing whereof is of the same temper with the open ear following: "His eye is upon the righteous, and His ear open to their cry;" that eye which stands in opposition to His face, which is against the wicked. *2d.* And to observe His ordinances and judgments, reverently to practise all the duties of the first table to God, and to such also God casts His eye of respect: "The eye of the Lord is upon those that fear Him, and that hope in His mercy." *3d.* And to hearken to the means of both, to hear His voice: "When I counsel thee and instruct thee in the way that thou shouldst go, Mine eye is upon thee, both to keep thee to it, and to bless thee in it." 2. Because this engagement is a means to accomplish His promise: because thou hast avouched God, God hath avouched thee, and will do as He hath said, and again, as He hath said: the repetition whereof seems to argue contentedness in God, in that, by this avouchment, a way was opened for the accomplishment of His promise. "God is well pleased for His righteousness sake," delights, when He can evidence Himself to be righteous and just, for the law and words of His mouth He will magnify and make honourable in the faithfulness of their accomplishment. Mercy, the acts of mercy please Him. God finds in a righteous man rest of spirit, because by him He sends down a full influence of His favour upon the world. "If the world knew (say some Hebrew doctors,) of what worth a righteous man was, they would hedge him about with pearls." His life is beneficial to all, even in some sort to God Himself; for by him mercy is shewn to the world: his death therefore is of great consequence: a greater affliction than those curses mentioned; "I will make thy plagues wonderful; thy heavens shall be brass,

they shall distil no dew nor rain to water the earth; but I will do a marvellous thing, a marvellous and strange, a good man, a wise man shall be taken away; and I can send no more blessings upon you:" There remains not a heart engaged, to whom I delight to approach; whiles such were, mine eye was satisfied with seeing good, my heart with doing good; now the one is removed, the other stopped. O where is he that engageth his heart to approach to his God!

III.—*The examining of the Duty.*

This engagement being thus approved, and therefore to be entered on; let us a little examine the duty, and mind two things. 1. What particulars do engage us, by what acts or thoughts doth the heart become engaged? And, 2. What hinders this engagement, and stops our entrance thereupon?

I. Several and many ways doth the heart become engaged to God: no consideration can enter our hearts, no occurrent happen in our lives, but it offers reasons enforcing this duty. We are engaged to God by our being, by our receiving, by our doing: mind either, and acknowledge thyself engaged.

1. Our being what we are, engageth us: *1st.* That we are creatures, and so not forgotten in the everlasting night of a not-being: that we are men, and not beasts; that we are Christians, and not heathens; all are engagements. *2d.* But our being thus and thus; men of gifts and parts; placed in such callings; qualified with such endowments; interested in such privileges: these are engagements indeed.

2. What we have. *1st.* Every thing we have received binds us; all the acts of God's providence over us; all the effects of God's goodness to us: health, food, callings, trades, friends, families, clothes, the service of the creatures; sun, rain, fruits of the earth: all, all these are bonds. *2d.* But especially, our more peculiar favours; inward experience

of His love, and fruition of soul-communion with Him: Oh, who would not be engaged for this!

3. What we do, even our own actions become our obligations: and that which comes from us binds us. 1st. Our feeling prayers. Who dare practise what he prays against? A prayer against the power of sin, obliges to walk in the power of that prayer: neither will any lightly omit what but late as an evil he hath confessed to God. 2d. But especially (which is our present work) our solemn and serious vows, protestations, promises: our covenant in baptism, our particular covenants entered into, upon the apprehension of some approaching calamity, upon a day of humiliation, at a piercing sermon, or soul-searching prayer before a sacrament, or the like. If we have spoken with our lips, we cannot go back, we are engaged.

II. As for such things that may hinder, we should both note and avoid. 1. Ignorance: "If thou knewest the gift of God," saith Christ to the Samaritan woman: want of praying comes from want of knowing. "Have you received the Holy Ghost?" was Paul's question, but the reply was, that could not be; we "have not so much as heard, whether there be a Holy Ghost, or no." Have you engaged your souls in a solemn league? Let this be our query, and the answer will be, We have not so much as heard, whether there be such a duty, or no. Ignorance hinders this bond. 2. Wretched profaneness, which slights and sets at nought all duties, ordinary, extraordinary; such mind sin, and the fulfilling thereof: and bind themselves to mischief with cords of vanity; whilst in the mean time they are contented to sit loose from God. 3. Wicked policy, both to avoid the taking, and to evade the keeping: scruples of conscience shall be pretended by such as know not what conscience means. Scripture shal be alleged, by such as are little versed therein: this sentence shall be thus explained: this relaesement shall be thus pretended: all is but seemingly

to stop the mouth of conscience, that saith, they must both make and pay vows unto God. Yet the wilfully ignorant will neglect it; the wretchedly profane will contemn it; the wickedly politic will avoid it; so the heart shall be left to its own swing, open to all corruption that breaks in like a flood. For the prevention whereof, let us come on to

IV.—*Encouragements to the practice.*

The point thus propounded, and in several particulars described, wherein and whereby the soul may be engaged; there is nothing remaining, but the practice of it, and that is yours. Up then, and be doing; disoblige yourselves, and be no longer servants to the world, to sin, to obey either in the lusts thereof: but be ye bound to serve righteousness, and the God of righteousness; for His service is perfect freedom. In this encouragement to this work, that I might do as much as I can, in this little time granted, and gained for preparation and delivery; I would advise, exhort, resolve, and so prevent irreverence, backwardness, and doubting; that neither the ignorant may profane, nor the refractory contemn, nor the scrupulous question this holy ordinance of God, as unholy needless, ambiguous. Let this encouragement then be received in words: 1. Cautionary. 2. Hortatory. 3. Satisfactory.

I. *Cautionary.*—Let this great work be done judiciously, cautiously, and as an ordinance of God. Take we heed therefore, 1. To the manner. 2. To the matter. 3. To the consequence.

I. *To the manner.* See that it be done; 1. Cheerfully. 2. Religiously.

First, Cheerfully and willingly; for so did the people of Israel in their covenanting with God: "They swore unto the Lord with a loud voice, with shoutings, and trumpets, and music, and they rejoiced because of the oath." God loves a cheerful giver, His heart is toward those that

willingly offer themselves to the work of the Lord. And here, let me not conceal the mercy of the Lord to us, in the work now in hand; for why should not the Lord have the glory of all His favours? God hath directed our hearts to this duty, cheered up our affections to this engagement. Who almost sees not His hand in all this? This cheerfulness and forwardness I now call for, I did, I do, I hope, I shall see.

1st. *I did see.* Which of us, brethren, hath not his heart yet rejoicing, but even to think upon this work, this last Monday in this place? Here was cheerfulness: who was not glad to see it? Who was not encouraged to it? Here was a willing people freely offering themselves to be bound to the Lord. Here was rejoicing; 1. In the performance: The like duty was never seen in our days within this land. It was, I am persuaded, the very birth-day of this kingdom, born anew to comfort and success; our hearts were then so elevated, they are not settled yet. 2. For the performance of such a duty, in such a manner, by such persons. You might here have seen the Hon. House of Commons, unanimously with hearts and hands lifted up to the heavens, swearing to the Most High God. Here might you have seen our dear brethren, the noble and learned Commissioners of Scotland, willingly coming into this covenant of truth, as the representatives of, and a pledge for the whole kingdom. Here might you have seen the grave and reverend Assembly of Divines, forwardly countenancing others, willingly submitting themselves to this bond of the Lord. What I then saw, and now rehearse, most of you can attest. Ask your fathers, consult with the aged of our times, whether ever such a thing were done in their days, or in the days of their fathers before them.

2d, *I do see;* and believe the like now: I have ground to be persuaded, that you also come with alacrity to this service. 1. The order for the taking, honours you with this,

that you were desirous of yourselves, without compulsion, to take this upon you: blessed therefore be you of the Lord, and blessed be the Lord for you. 2. The fulness of this present assembly, called only for this end, for this duty. The nature of your persons. Nobles, knights, gentlemen, submit themselves to the yoke of the Lord. Colonels, captains, officers in the army, soldiers; even these also stand not off from, but close to, and for this work in hand. Those of the Scots nation within this city, by their willingness, do give a check to this cavil raised by some, who have nothing else to say, yet say this, perhaps the kingdom of Scotland will not take it. We can instance in none, none that I know here. The ministers of the Lord, that have refuged themselves to this little sanctuary, both increase and honour the number of them that swear, their own callings, and themselves. All these, as they have forwardly offered, so doubtless will earnestly repair, in their lot, the breaches made in the Lord's house. Here is cheerfulness.

3d, I hope, I shall see and hear, the next Lord's day, or the next convenient time, all our people readily coming into this bond; that so, both English and Scots, parliament and assembly, nobility and city, may all rejoice together.

Second, Religiously: godly works must be done in a godly manner, that the act done for God's glory may be sanctified with God's presence. With what serious humiliation, and hearty prayers did Nehemiah begin this duty? What a number of able men did Josiah collect together? And how reverently did they read in the Scriptures, and speak of the nature of the covenant? Both Nehemiah by praying, and Josiah by reading, desired in this holy business to approve themselves followers of holiness in the sight of God. And at the last taking in this place, who was not touched with that feeling prayer, made by that man of God*; that godly exhortation, which followed from another†;

* Mr. White. † Mr. Nye.

that pithy relation by that man of name* ; that soul-affecting thanksgiving, wherewith a godly doctor closed the day†? and, that no less piety and love of God might appear in you, after you resolved upon the work ; you desired that the ordinance might be sanctified to you by the word of God and prayer ; you moved me to this employment, and got it ordered accordingly : and now, I doubt not, but in the action, you will do it with such reverence of God's majesty, such awfulness of heart, that in lifting up your hands to the most high God, He may be pleased to accept the sacrifice, and make it comfortable. Thus to the manner.

II. To the matter. For the matter, that it be lawfully warranted by the Word of God. To examine these particularly, in all and several parts thereof, were the work of a volume, not of one sermon ; that will be done by others : but to do something, and what we may for this time : it is not difficult to parallel from Scripture this covenant in all the parts of it. The lawfulness of covenanting, I suppose not questionable, as a furtherance and help to a spiritual progress ; we find it oft used : the New Testament affords but rare instances, the church then in its infancy having little occasion, and as little need of such combining, fasting and days of prayer, which are of the same nature, we find often ; and the angel "lift up his hand, (a covenanting gesture) and swore by Him that liveth," (a covenanting act,) but the Old Testament is full. Take then this as granted, and come to the particular materials, and in every part, for every article, we can find an instance. The articles in this covenant are six : the preamble sets forth, 1. The occasion : their aim at God's glory, their enemies aim at their ruin. 2. The pattern ; the commendable practice of those kingdoms, and the example of churches in all ages. The close containeth their resolution against all impediments

* Mr. Henderson. † Dr. Gouge.

that may either stop the taking, or disable the keeping of this league, their own sins. The body of the covenant contains the articles: the lawfulness of which seems thus to be warranted.

The first is the reformation of the false, and the preservation of the true worship of God, and the uniting of all the kingdoms in that truth thus reformed. Such a covenant took Asa, and his people. The first is for the reformation of religion decayed. He purged away all the dross, and removed all the defects. He repaired the altar of the Lord, the main part of their ceremonial covenant. Then for the uniting of the kingdoms in the embracing of this truth. Asa gathered all Judah and Benjamin, this was his own people, the subjects of one kingdom; and with them the strangers, that is, the inhabitants of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, these were the people of another land. So here are the persons covenanting, the matter covenanted to. The persons, the subjects, two several kingdoms; the matter, reformation, and to seek the God of their fathers; to this they all swear, like as the inhabitants of England, Scotland and Ireland, meet all in one duty, even a covenant, and that to one end, to seek and serve God in the purity of His ways, after the purity of His will; to this, as Asa and his people, we swear.

The second is the extirpation of idolatry and wickedness, and all things contrary to truth, not according to godliness, the proper and perpetual matter of all covenants. So did Asa, so did Joash, so did Josiah, so did Nehemiah. 1. Asa took away all abominations. He was impartial, sparing neither sin, place, nor person: not sin, he removed all abominations; not place, from all places, towns of his inheritance, and of his conquest: not person, he deposed his mother, or rather grandmother from her state for her idolatry. 2. Joash, or his covenanters. Indeed the people of the land, (for such usually are most zealous) they

ruined the altars, house and all. They broke down all the monuments of idolatry, all to pieces, thoroughly, to some purpose, priest and all. They slew Matthan priest of Baal with the sword. 3. Josiah purged the whole kingdom: and Nehemiah with zeal, extirpated the strange wives Here is a covenant that rooted out idolatry, popery, the Baalistical prelate Matthan, and all his prelatical faction the Chemarim, and all this, for this end, that the Lord might be one, and His name one.

The third is, the preservation of the liberties of the kingdom and the king, for matters merely civil. Such was that covenant that Jehoiada established, after their engagements for spirituals to God. He made a covenant between the king and people, that he should preserve their liberties, they his authority, and both each other mutually.

The fourth, for the discovery and punishment of malignants, that increase or continue our division. Without a covenant such a discovery did Mordecai make of Bigthan and Teresh, the king's eunuchs. Such a discovery made the Jews of Sanballat, and his fellows to Nehemiah. Josiah was not without his informers. But with a covenant was the punishment of such varlets settled. Whosoever would not seek the Lord God of their fathers, should be slain without sparing, be he whom he would be, small or great, man or woman. For why should not every one value the public above the private, the common good before his own?

The fifth, the preservation of the union, and of the pacification between the two kingdoms. This is the matter of all civil leagues. Such a league made Isaac with Abimelech, Jacob with Laban, David with Hiram. But chiefly such a pacification doth God promise to make between Israel and Judah. They should both live under one king, so do the English and Scots: and both dwell in one land, so do the English and Scots: they shall have the same

ministry and religion; so do labour the English and Scots: and a pacification will God make between them, and that by covenant, and such a covenant, as should never be forgotten or broken; such a thing are we doing now, and then God's sanctuary shall be placed among us, the sanctuary of His presence, service, protection, which is our expectation and our hope.

Lastly, The firm adhering to this covenant, and continuance in the same notwithstanding all opposition, contradiction, dissuasion to the contrary whatsoever. All the people stood to the covenant. This was Josiah's care not only for himself, but for his people; "He made all that were found in Judah and Benjamin to stand to it; so all his days they turned not back from the Lord God of their Fathers." This is the covenant, and this is a general view of the general matter; this is according to the aim of those that made it, take it, swear to it. Who but an atheist can refuse the first? who but a papist the second? who but an oppressor, or a rebel, the third? who but the guilty, the fourth? who but men of fortune, desperate cavaliers, the fifth? who but light and empty men, unstable as water, the sixth? In a word, the duty is such, that God hath ordained; the matter is such, as God approveth; the taking such, as God observeth; and the consequences such, as God hath promised. And in them stands my third caution, to which I now come.

III. To the consequences. For the consequences, and issues that do or must follow upon the taking, be also cautelous; take heed that after this heart-engagement to God, none start back like a broken bow. See that you neither, 1. Falsify the oath; or, 2. Profane the oath.

I. Do not falsify the oath, making the actions of the outward man contrary to this action of the heart. An oath is one of the two immutable things, wherein it is impossible that God should lie; not fitting, that man should. The

people's forementioned example teaches constancy, they stood to it. The covenants ordinary epithet [everlasting] implies continuance: neither can God, nor should man play the children, say and unsay. All our covenants in Him should be yea; not yea, and nay. If we prove loose, we prove false, and lie unto God that made us. Take heed to your covenant. This stone, these walls, these pillars, these seats shall witness against you, that ye denied Him: to falsify the engagement, is to deny our God; His power, His revenging justice, His word, His presence, and the like; if you wilfully falsify this oath wherewith you are bound, as much as in you lies, you make God any thing but a God. Keep truth and fidelity for ever.

II. Do not profane it by a slight esteem, by an irreverent taking, by an unholy life.

First, By a slight esteem, as a matter of no moment. Can that be a trifle, which is the fruit of the judicious consultations of the agents of both kingdoms, as the only means to perpetuate the union? Can that be a trifle, which was produced by such, who had merely the glory of God before their eyes as conducing much thereto? Can that be a trifle, which is published as the main and sole preventive of all the bloody plots of God's enemies against the truth? Can that be a trifle, which is now cleaved to as a means more effectual, and a degree above supplications, remonstrances, protestations, to preserve ourselves, and our religion? All this and more the preamble speaks.

Second, By irreverent taking. It was resolved on after mature deliberation. It is a lifting up of the hand to the most high God, and a swearing by His name, and God's name must not be taken in vain: such will God not hold guiltless. But of this before.

Third, By an unholy life. Such a thing would mar all we have done; though defiled with former sins, yet now sin no more: our covenant forbids it: our state now stands thus.

Either by our sins we shall make a breach into our covenant, or by our covenant make a breach from our sins. In the close of the covenant, we resolve on the endeavour that this covenant may have its desired fruit. We desire to be humbled for our own sins, the land's sins, undervaluing the gospel, neglecting the power, and purity of it, no endeavour to receive Christ into our hearts, no care to walk worthy of Him in our lives. Such and the like sins a godly covenanter must shun, lest he profane it. Let us then prize it as an effectual means of good, take it with a reverend fear of God, honour it in holiness of life for ever. Let us both verify it, and sanctify it by continuing to stand in it, by endeavouring to live by it to God's glory, that this taken covenant may be for the name, the honour, the praise of the great Jehovah for ever.

II. *Hortatory.* These cautions being observed; come all, and let us enter into an everlasting covenant with the Lord; come on, and let us engage our hearts unto our God: we have a propensity to keep off; let a covenant keep us close: our hearts would be wandering; let a covenant bind them. Will you trust yourselves without a tie? Do you know yourselves? Come to this work, with a heart, with a heart lifted up, as well as a hand, as high as a hand; "Let us lift up our hearts to our hands;" let the ardency of our affection raise up our spirit to meet the Lord, to whom we adjoin ourselves for ever. To you I cry, to whom the order speaks, to every one of you I call, come engage your hearts.

First, Nobles, both greater and lesser, think not the duty below you, too mean for you. There is but one way to heaven for all. Scorn not to join with inferiors in this work. In Christ there is neither male nor female, no respect of persons. The same way that the soul of the poorest is refreshed, is the soul of the richest. Poor men pray, and princes must pray; common men humble their souls, and repent, and crowned kings must do so too. The

people of God, they walk aright, and all men, great and small, must follow them alike: the eye of every ordinary man must be towards the Lord. So as the tribes of Israel are, and the same way must Tyre and Sidon look, though they be very wise. No largeness of parts, greatness of place, eminency in gifts, of wisdom, learning, wit, not amplitude of rule, nor any high thoughts can exempt; but he must subject himself to the condition and courses of the lowest sort. Heaven regards not the goodliness of the person, looks not as man looks: for God regards the heart.

Second, Soldiers, for you also are engagers. This says, you have a noble pattern; but I hope I may say, you outwrite your copy. They came to John Baptist, and to the place, where he baptized. You come to the presence of God, and the place, where the heart is to be engaged. They came to be directed what to do; you to do what has been directed. Ride you on prosperously in this righteous truth. It lies mainly upon you to be holy, yea, more than upon others. Your adventures are more hazardous, your dangers more probable; yea, your deaths perhaps more near. Therefore,

1. You must remove from you wickedness, and wicked men. Wickedness from your hearts, wicked men from your armies. Let both your persons be holy, and your companies holy. God Himself commands the former, the prophet from God the latter. "When the host goeth forth, then, and then chiefly, thou shalt keep thee from every evil thing." When Judah's king marched out, assisted with Israelitish auxiliaries, which were idolaters: let not (saith the prophet) "the men of Israel go with thee, for God is not with Israel:" if thou do, thou shalt not prosper. If there were no evil sin in your hearts, no evil man in your hosts, God would be with you, with a shout, even the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

And 2. Your success depends on God's presence. When thou seest multitudes of armies encircling thee, fear

not, for God is with thee, and God is with thee to save thee; He walks with thee to fight for thee, and to prosper thee. We shall be cast back, yea, quite off, if God go not forth with our armies; or, in our armies; the word bears either: when God goes not in our armies, rules not in our hearts, lives, conversations, by holiness; then He goes not forth with our armies by victory and success.

3. The want of godly agents, to manage a godly cause, a great lamentation. "Help, Lord, save, O God, for the godly fail, and the faithful cease from among men:" were there any such in being, they would bear rule with God, and be faithful for the saints, their persons and prayers would gain prevalency with God, their endeavours and constancy would show fidelity to the saints, and then in Judah, our land, would things go well: and as once Ezekiel of the scarcity of fit governors to rule, so we of fit men to fight, when corruption and looseness hath so possessed the hearts, and lives of our men of war, that there remains no sanctified and godly man to make a soldier; "This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation."

4. What ground have we to expect good? When the sons of darkness go to cast out the prince of darkness, is this possible? Can Satan cast out Satan? It is a satisfactory answer, that we rest in, and stops the mouths of all not incurably blinded, when we hear of protestations, and promises to maintain the protestant religion and laws of the land; when we see, that the effecting of the one is by the sword of papists, of the other, by the hand of delinquents; except we should think, that man can (as God) work happy ends by contrary means. For we say, how can Satan cast out Satan? So to ourselves, 'tis not very likely, that, if Satan keep the hold he hath of our souls, you should dispossess him of that strong hold he hath of our land. But you know so much, and therefore by engaging your heart this day to God you first endeavour

to expel Satan out of your own consciences; and then shall you see clearly to drive him from our kingdom.

Third. Our brethren of Scotland, come you, and enter into this sure covenant. Lay the foundation of such an eternal league and peace, that the sun shall never see broken: all your countrymen, your kingdom are not here. Let your forwardness to this work tell us, what they would do, if they were. Some having nothing else to say, yet cannot withhold to question, whether the Scots will enter into it or no? As the question is without any ground, so shall it be without any other answer for the present, than this: all of that nation in town have been ready to this great work. Can you instance in any that have been backward to swear unto the Lord? If in none, then put away prejudicate thoughts, and entertain in their place earnest desires, that this covenant now by both kingdoms entered into, may be like Ezekiel's sticks, which resembled the divided houses of Judah and Israel: which, as the prophet held them, became one in his hand. So this national covenant taken into the hand of God's merciful approbation, may this day, this year become one, and for ever remain one: so that (as Israel and Judah after this typical union in two sticks) England and Scotland after this religious union in one covenant, may for ever be one people in this island of Great Britain: and that one king may continue king to them both: and that henceforth they may no more be two peoples, nor divided into kingdoms: that our religion be corrupted no more, as of late: but being cleansed, we may be the Lord's people, and He may be our God for ever: that Jesus Christ may bear rule, and we both may have one ministry, and enjoy that truth, which Christ, when He ascended up on high, gave as a gift to men, during our days, and the days of our posterity: we, and our sons, and our sons' sons, from this time forth, and for evermore: that the Lord would plant His sanctuary

among us, and make these two people His dwelling-place continually: that this covenant may be a covenant of peace, and a covenant of truth, and a covenant for everlasting. And let all that desire it, daily pray for it, and now express it, and with cheerfulness of heart say, Amen, Amen.

Fourth, You, my brethren of the ministry, your hearts are to be engaged too, that you also may gain God by the engagement: be not you behind the very forwardest of the Lord's people; you are not an inconsiderable party in this land. The joy and happiness of Israel was because of the Levites that waited, that were diligent in their duties, and diligently attended upon the Lord. "I will cause the horn of Israel to flourish, saith God:" by what means? "I will give thee, Ezekiel, an open mouth." That God may give you a heart to teach knowledge, come, engage your hearts as a gift to God. O, saith Moses, "that all the Lord's people were prophets!" O, say we, that all this land's people had prophets, but prophets of the Lord, that might feed them with wisdom and understanding, that they all might know the Lord, from the greatest to the least of them! But ah? Lord God, the eye of this kingdom is distempered, dim, and dark; and then how great is this darkness! our prophets have prophesied lies, and our priests have pleaded for Baal, and they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them? Instead of standing for God, they have stood against Him; and instead of being the best, they are become the basest: the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail. If God should come, as once, to seek for a man, that should stand in the gap, and make up the breach; among these He would find the fewest: in this respect our state may be like that which we find described. Christ comes to make a perfect description of His church, and so consequently, a comfortable expression of Himself to His church: and whereas the eyes are the chiefest seat of beauty, and therefore

likeliest to be stood upon, he begins thus. "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me." By eyes, understand the ministry: I come to speak comfortable things to My people, but set away the ministers out of My sight, for they have overcome My patience, and filled Me with fury: now these being removed, the description doth lovingly go on. Thy hair, thy young professors, are like a flock of goats; thy teeth, thy civil officers, like a flock of sheep; thy temples, thy ordinary and common Christians. All right but the eyes, the eyes I cannot endure. But let none of us provoke this complaint, nor hold off any longer from the Lord that invites. What say you? Are you willing to this engagement? Will you bind yourselves to the Lord? Let me extend my speech to all, and dispatch the remains of this point, and my meaning thus: that you may be encouraged to engage, consider two things.

First, The seasonableness.

Secondly, The success of such engagements.

First, The seasonableness: there is a time for all purposes, and every word and action is beautiful in his own time. A public engagement is then seasonable, 1. When a land hath been full of troubles: God by such troubles prepares a people for Him in this duty. "I will cause you to pass under the rod, and so I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." And we know, we feel God hath chastised us sore of late; but in them He hath not given us over to death, that by them He might prepare us for Himself. When a land hath been full of corruptions, and a shrewd decay hath been in spirituals: by a covenant hath such a people recovered themselves, and regained their God. After the great apostasy by Athaliah, Jehoiada renewed their interest by a covenant. When Manasses and his son had suffered destruction from God, and advanced idolatry with or above God; Josiah purged all by a covenant. Our decays are evident, our corruptions destructive: our

covenant therefore seasonable. Come, let us engage our hearts to approach to God. 3. When the enemy begins to fall, and God begins to shine upon His own. Asa returning from a victory, called his land to a covenant. When Athaliah was slain, the league was sworn, by Joash and his kingdom. Since this motion of a covenant is come among us, God hath, as it were, begun to draw near, in the siege of Gloucester raised, in the success at Newbery, gained. God is worming out His and our adversaries, which He will do by little and little, till they be consumed. The covenant is seasonable.

Second, The success. Come and see the works of the Lord, what wonders He hath wrought, when a people hath thus bound themselves to be His. 1. A king injuriously put from his right by an usurping hand, after such a covenant was re-established, "He sat him down on the throne of the kings." 2. A land miserably put from its peace, after such a covenant, was re-settled, peace was re-obtained; and that as a fruit of prayer, and so acknowledged, "Israel had sworn, and sought God; God was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about." 3. Religion craftily, and wickedly put from its purity after such a covenant, was reformed; after such a reformation continued. The engagement being made, "all Josiah's days they returned not back from the Lord God of their fathers." 4. Rebels and rebellion, basely and bloodily backed and managed against the Lord and His ways, against His people and their practices; after such a covenant, have been overthrown and subdued, "I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." Then I will sever from among you the rebels; I will chase them from their own land, and hinder that they shall not enter into the land of Israel. The Lord give this success concerning Ireland, sever out the rebels there from true subjects; chase them from their own land; and yet keep them from ever entering into our land, the land of the inheritance of the Lord.

Now these successful effects of covenanting well minded,

First, May hint to us a satisfactory reason, in case peace comes not presently. God hath some more adversaries to overthrow, to worm out; His sword hath not eaten flesh enough; neither are His arrows drunk with blood yet: with the blood of such earthly men, whom He hath appointed to destruction. The hearts of the Philistines were so hardened, that they never sought after peace, "For it came of the Lord, to the intent that they might be utterly destroyed." Who knows, whether our peace hath been denied; our propositions cast out; our treaties fruitless, for such an end as this? It was of the Lord, who hath a purpose to destroy more. God lays afflictions on His people, and they continue upon them: but in the mean space to quiet their spirits, He teacheth them out of His law, that these troubles must stay only "till a pit be digged for the wicked."

Second, May encourage us to go on. You have now armour of proof, such armour as is not ordinary, armed with a covenant: Go, saith the angel to Gideon, in this thy might. Go (say I, to every one) in this thy might, the strength of this thy covenant, and the effect will be such, as is not ordinary. When the Philistines perceived that the Israelites had brought the ark of the covenant into the battle, they cried out, "Woe unto us: for it hath not been so heretofore: woe unto us: who shall deliver us out of the hands of these mighty gods?" When your enemies shall perceive, that you come armed with the armour of a covenant with God, I hope they, struck with amazement, shall cry, "Woe unto us: we were never so opposed before: woe unto us; who shall deliver us out of the power of this mighty prevailer?" If it will thus daunt, take it with you, be strong. Again, I say, Go in the might thereof, and God shall prosper thee for ever.

III. *Satisfactory.*—According to the condition of the person, such is the nature of the objection. One out

of the malignity of his spirit, cavils against the work; another out of tenderness of conscience, scruples the taking. I shall briefly touch upon one or two, and wind up all in a few words. The queries I have met with, are such as these: two objections when I was designed to this service, were sent me in writing, which, when thoroughly viewed, I perceived nothing at all to concern our case, or covenant.

Obj. 1. Whether by any law, divine or human, may reformation of religion be brought in by arms? *Ans.* 1. What is this at all to the covenant, where there is no mention of arms at all? 2. What is this to our present condition, where reforming by arms is not at all the question? For if reformation of religion be the case of our affairs; then either the parliament are they that do it, or the cavaliers: not the cavaliers, for they are on the defensive: witness all their declarations. Not the parliament, for then the cavaliers will be found fighters against religion, and resisters of God. 3. I answer negatively, it is not. The sword is not the means which God hath ordained to propagate the gospel: "Go and teach all nations;" not, go and subdue all nations, is our Master's precept.

Obj. 2. Whether to swear to a government that shall be, or to swear not to dissent from such a future government, be not to swear upon an implicit faith? *Ans.* 1. This is nothing to the covenant, neither can I see upon what ground any should raise such an impertinent scruple. 2. It is, he that so swears, swears upon an implicit faith: for one reason against the articles of the prelates was, that they forced us to swear to the homilies that shall be set out. But these things are extravagant.

Other objections by word of mouth have been propounded, some whereof I will here touch upon.

Obj. 1. One would make a stand at the phrase, [in our callings,] as if some politic mystery were therein involved,

and would have it changed, [according to our callings, or so far forth as they extend.] There is an identity in the phrase, an action enjoined to be done in such a place, every corner, as far as that place extends, is that place, and no other. All is one.

Obj. How if the parliament should hereafter see a convenience in prelacy for this kingdom, were not this oath then prejudicial, either to the parliament's liberty, or kingdom's felicity? *Ans.* This objection supposes,

First, That the most wicked antichristian government may be a lawful government in point of conscience.

Second, That it is possible, that this prelatical government may be convenient for a state or kingdom. When as 1. They have been burdensome in all ages; what opposites in England have they been to our kings, till their interests were changed? 2. All reformed religions in the world have expelled them, as incompatible with reformation. 3. They have set three kingdoms together by the ears, for the least, and worst of causes, which now lie weltering in their own blood, ready to expire. 4. Experience now shows, there is no inconvenience in their want; either in Scotland, or in England.

Obj. But what, if the exorbitances be purged away, may not I, notwithstanding my oath, admit of a regulated prelacy? *Ans.* 1. We swear not against a government that is not. 2. We swear against the evils of every government: and doubtless many materials of prelacy must of necessity be retained, as absolutely necessary. 3. Taking away the exorbitances, the remaining will be a new government, and no prelacy.

Obj. For the discovery of all malignants, all that have been; whether, if I have a friend, that hath been a malignant, and is now converted, am I bound to discover him? *Ans.* This his malignity, was either before the covenant, or since; if before, no. For then this league had no being, and a

non-ens can have no contrariety. If since, the discovery must be at the first appearance of malignity, whilst he is so.

Obj. What if one make a party to uphold prelacy, whilst it stands by law, must I oppose him, or discover him by virtue of this oath? Doth the oath bind me to oppose legal acts? *Ans.* 1. Quer. Whether there be any particular law for prelacy? 2. Quer. Whether the making a party be legal? 3. Quer. Whether any thing, the extirpation of which is sworn by an ordinance of parliament, can be said to stand by law?

These are some queries I have met with. I heartily wish that the same tenderness of conscience in all things may be seen, which if not, it will hardly be called a scruple of tenderness, but a cavil of malignity. What now remains but only prayers, that the great God of our judgments and consciences, would so clear and satisfy our souls in these leagues and bonds, that without reluctancy we may all swear to God, and, having sworn, we may have a care to keep the oath inviolable; that as once Israel, so all England may rejoice because of the oath: and God may be established, and His kingdom settled; that His presence may dwell among men, and His protection among the sons of men; that He may be near in our covenanting, found in our prayers, and give us rest; and that we being engaged, may live to Him, and not to others, henceforth and for ever.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT:

SERMON AT WESTMINSTER.

*By JOSEPH CARYL.**

> "And because of all this, we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it."
> —*Nehemiah* ix. 38.

The general subject of this verse, is the special business of this day. A solemn engagement to the Lord, and among ourselves, in a sure covenant. Wherein we may consider these five things.

First, The nature of a covenant, from the whole.

Secondly, The grounds of a covenant, from those words, "because of all this."

Thirdly, The property of a covenant, in that epithet, Sure—"we make a sure covenant."

Fourthly, The parties entering into, and engaging themselves in a covenant, expressed by their several degrees and functions, Princes, Levites, priests. And were these all? All whom this verse specifies, and enow to bring in all the rest? Where the governors and the teachers go before in

* Mr. Caryl was a member of the Westminster Assembly. This Sermon was given at Westminster "at that Publick Convention (ordered by the Honourable House of Commons) for the taking of the Covenant, by all such of all Degrees as wilfully presented themselves, upon Friday, October 6, 1643." The House of Commons thanked Caryl for the Sermon and ordered its publication.

an holy example, what honest heart will not follow? And the next chapter shews us, all who were honest hearted, following this holy example, verse 28: "And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands, unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding: They clave unto their brethren, their nobles, and entered into," &c.

Fifthly, The outward acts by which they testified their inward sincere consent, and engaged themselves to continue faithful in that covenant: First, writing it. Second, sealing to it. Third, (in the tenth chapter, ver. 29.) "They entered into a curse." Fourth, "Into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe to do all the commandments of the Lord their God, with the statutes and judgments. And that they would not give their daughters to the people of the land," &c: with divers many articles of that covenant, tending both to their ecclesiastical and civil reformation.

I begin with the first point, the nature of a covenant. Concerning which, we may receive some light from the notation of the original words; 1. For a covenant. 2. For the making of a covenant The Hebrew *Berith* (*a covenant*) comes from *Barah*, which signifieth two things: *First*, To choose exactly, and judiciously. *Second*, To eat moderately, or sparingly. And both these significations of the root *Barah*, have an influence upon this derivative *Berith*, a covenant: the former of these intimating, if not enforcing, that a covenant is a work of sad and serious deliberation, for such are elective acts. Election is, or ought to be made, upon the rational turn of judgment, not upon a catch of fancy, or the hurry of our passions.

Now, in a covenant, there is a double work of election: *First*, An election of the persons, between whom. *Second*,

An election of the conditions, or terms upon which the covenant is entered. As God's covenant people are His chosen people, so must ours. Some persons will not enter into covenant, though invited; and others, though they offer themselves, are not to be admitted. They who are not fit to build with us, are not fit to swear with us. Some offered their help to the Jews in the repair of the temple, "Let us build with you, for we seek your God." But this tender of their service was refused. "Ye have nothing to do with us, to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build." What should we do with their hands in the work, whose hearts, we know, are not in the work? The intendment of such enjoining, must be either to build their hay and stubble with our gold and silver, or else to pull down by night what they build by day, and secretly to undermine that noble fabric, which seemingly they endeavoured to set up. We find in this book of Nehemiah, that the persons combining in that covenant, were choice persons. The text of the tenth chapter, sets two marks of distinction upon them. *First*, "All they that separated themselves from the people of the lands, unto the law of God." *Second*, All "having knowledge, and having understanding." Here are two qualifications, whereof one is spiritual, and the other is natural. The plain English of both may be this, "that fools and malignants, such as (in some measure) know not the cause, and such as have no love at all to the cause, should be outcasts from this covenant." Such sapless and rotten stuff will but weaken, if not corrupt this sacred band.

The tenor of the covenant now tendered, speaks thus respecting the persons. "We noblemen, barons, knights, gentlemen, citizens, burgesses, ministers of the gospel, and commons, of all sorts, in the kingdom of England, Scotland, and Ireland." And doth not this indistinctly admit all, and all, of all sorts? I answer, no. For the words following

in the preface, shew expressly, that only they are called to it, who are of one reformed religion; which shuts out all papists, till they return. And the articles pass them through a finer sieve, admitting only such as promise, yea, and swear, that through the grace of God, they will sincerely, really, and constantly endeavour the preservation of the reformed religion, against the common enemy in the one kingdom, the reformation and extirpation of what is amiss in the other two; as also, in their own persons, families, and relations. They who do thus, are choice persons indeed, and they who swear to do thus, are (in charity and justice) to be reputed so, till their own acts and omissions falsify their oaths. Thus our covenant makes an equivalent, though not a formal or nominal election of the persons.

Second, There must be a choice of conditions in a covenant; as the persons obliged, so the matter of the obligation must be distinct. This is so eminent in the covenant offered, that I may spare my pains in the clearing of it; every man's pains in reading of it, cannot but satisfy him, that there are six national conditions about which we make solemn oath, and one personal, about which we make a most solemn profession and declaration, before God and the world. And all these are choice conditions: such as may well be held forth to be (as indeed they are) the results and issues of many prayers, and serious consultations, in both the kingdoms of England and Scotland. Conditions they are, in which holiness and wisdom, piety and policy, zeal for God in purging His church, and care for man in settling the commonwealth, appear to have had (in a due subordination) their equal hand and share.

Thus much of a covenant, from the force of the word in the first sense, leading us to the choice both of persons and conditions.

Second, The root signifies, to eat moderately, or so much as breaks our fast. And this refers also to the nature of a

covenant, which is to draw men into a friendly and holy communion, and converse one with another. "David describes a familiar friend, in whom he trusted, to be one, that did eat of his bread." And the apostle Paul, when he would have a scandalous brother denied all fellowship in church-covenant, he charges it thus, "With such a one, no not to eat." Hence it was a custom upon the making up of covenants, for the parties covenanting, soberly to feast together. "When Isaac and Abimelech sware one to another, and made a covenant; the sacred story tells us, that Isaac made them a feast, and they did eat and drink." A covenant is a binder of affection, to assure it, but it is a loosner of affection, to express it. And their hearts are most free to one another, which are most bound to one another. How unbecoming is it, that they who swear together, should be so strange as scarce to speak together? That which unites, ought also to multiply our affections.

Further, the word hints so to converse together as not to sin together; for it signifies moderation in eating. As if it would teach us, that at a covenant-feast, or when covenanters feast, they should have more grace, than meat at their tables: or if (through the blessing of God) their meat be much, their temperance should be more. The covenant yields us much business, and calls to action: excess soils our gifts, and damps our spirits, fitting us for sleep, not for work. In and by this covenant, we (who were almost carried into spiritual and corporal slavery) are called to strive for the mastery. Let us therefore (as this word and the apostle's rule instruct us) "Be temperate in all things." Intemperate excessive eaters will be but moderate workers, especially in covenant-work. A little will satisfy their consciences, who are given up to satisfy their carnal appetites. And he who makes his belly his god, will not make much of the glory of God.

So much concerning the nature of a covenant, from the

original word; for a covenant, signifying both to chuse, and to eat. We may take in some further light to discover the things from the original word, which we translate "make" —"Let us make a covenant."

That word signifies properly to cut, to strike, or to slay. The reason hereof is given, because at the making of solemn covenants, beasts were killed and divided asunder, and the covenant-makers went between the parts. When God made that first grand covenant with Abraham, He said unto him, "Take an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid all those pieces one against another." "Behold, a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp" (which latter was the token of God's presence for the deliverance of His people) passed between those pieces. In Jeremiah we have the like ceremony in making a covenant, "They cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof." Upon this usage the phrase is grounded of cutting or striking a covenant. Which ceremony had this signification in it, that when they passed between those divided parts of the slain beast, the action spake this curse or imprecation, "Let him be cut asunder, let his members be divided, let him be made as this beast, who violates the oath of this covenant."

From these observations about the words, we may be directed about the nature of the thing: and thence collect this description of a covenant. A covenant is a solemn compact or agreement between two chosen parties or more, whereby with mutual, free, and full consent they bind themselves upon select conditions, tending to the glory of God, and their common good.

A covenant strictly considered, is more than a promise, and less than an oath; unless an oath be joined with it, as was with that in the text, and is with this we have now before us. A covenant differs from a promise gradually,

and in the formalities of it, not naturally, or in the substance of it. God made promises to Abraham, Gen. xii. and Gen. xiii. but He made no covenant with him, till chap. xv. ver. 18. "In that day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham." And the work of the Lord in that day with Abraham, had not only truth and mercy in it, but state and majesty in it. A covenant day, is a solemn day. As the collection of many stars makes a constellation, so the collection of many promises makes a covenant. Or, as in the first of Genesis, "The gathering together of the waters, was by the Lord called seas:" so we may call the gathering together of promises, or conditions, a covenant. The Lord doth (as it were) rally all the promises of mercy made to us, which lie scattered up and down through the whole volume of the scriptures, and puts them together into a covenant: and we do (as it were) rally all the promises of duty which we owe unto God, and to one another, and put them together in a covenant. Such a bundle of duty is tied up in this present covenant; what duty is there which we owe to God, to His churches, or these commonwealths whereof we make not promise, either expressly, or by consequence in the compass of this covenant? And how great an obligation to duty doth this contain, wherein there is an obligation to every duty?

Seeing then this covenant, being taken, carries in it so great an obligation, it calls for great preparation before we take it. A slightness of spirit in taking this covenant, must needs cause a slightness of spirit in keeping it. All solemn duties, ought to have solemn preparations: and this I think, as solemn as any. A Christian ought to set his heart (as far as he can through the strength of Christ) into a praying frame, before he kneels down to prayer. And we ought to set our hearts in a promising frame, before we stand up to make such mighty promises. "Take heed how ye hear," is our Saviour's admonition in the gospel; surely then we had

need take heed how we swear. "Let a man examine himself (saith the apostle Paul) and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup;" let him come examined to the sacrament: so I may say, "Let a man examine himself, before he lift up his hand, or write down his name;" let him come examined to the covenant.

I shall briefly propose three heads of preparatory examination, respecting our entrance into this covenant.

First, Examine your hearts, and your lives, whether or no you are not pre-engaged in any covenant contrary to the tenor and conditions of this covenant? If any such upon inquiry be found, be sure you avoid it, before you engage yourselves in this. A super-institution in this kind, is very dangerous. Every man must look to it, that he takes this covenant *(corde vacante)* with a heart emptied of all covenants which are inconsistent with this. For a man to covenant with Christ and His people for reformation, while he hath either taken a covenant with others, or made a covenant in his own breast against it, is desperate wickedness. Or if upon a self-search, you find yourselves clear of any such engagements, yet search further. Every man by nature is a covenanter with hell, and with every sin he is at agreement: be sure you revoke and cancel that covenant, before you subscribe this. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer;" that is, He will not regard my prayers, (saith David). And if we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us covenanting: that is, He will not regard our covenant. Woe be unto those who make this league with God and His people, while they resolve to continue their league with sin: which is (upon the matter) a league with Satan. God and Satan will never meet in one covenant. "For what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ and Belial?"

Second, Before you enter into this covenant with God, consider of, and repent for this special sin, your former

breaches and failings in God's covenant. "We who were sometimes afar off, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, are made nigh by the blood of Jesus," even so nigh, as to be in covenant with God. Some who pretend to this privilege, will be found "Such as have counted the blood of the covenant to be an unholy thing." And where is the man that walketh so holily in this covenant as becomes him, and as it requires? Labour therefore to have those breaches healed by a fresh sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon your consciences, before you enter this covenant: If you put this new piece to an old garment, the rent will be made worse: If you put this new wine into old bottles, the bottles will break, and all your expected comforts will run out and be lost. If you should not feel and search your own hearts, without doubt the Lord will. "And if you be found as deceivers, you will bring a curse upon yourselves, and not a blessing." This is a covenant of amity with God: reconciliation must go before friendship, you can never make friendship till you have made peace, nor settle love, where hostility is unremoved.

Third, Inquire diligently at your own hearts, whether they come up to the terms of this covenant? You must bid high for the honour of a covenanter, for a part in this privilege. "Which of you," saith our Lord Christ to His hearers, "intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it, begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build, and was not able to finish." We are met this day to lay the foundation of one tower, and to pull up the foundation of another; we are pulling up the foundation of Babel's tower, and we are laying a foundation for Zion's tower. We have seen some who have heretofore done as much, but they have done no more; when they had

laid a foundation for those noble works in taking a solemn oath and covenant, they have never moved a hand after either to build or to pull down, unless it were quite cross to their own engagements, for the pulling down of Zion's tower, and the building of Babylon.

And what was the reason of this stand, or contrary motion? this surely was one, they did not gage their own hearts before hand, neither did they sit down to count the cost of such an undertaking. And therefore when they perceived the charge to arise so high, they neither could finish, nor would they endeavour it, but left the work before it looked above the ground; and are justly become a mock and a scorn and a reproach in Israel, these are the men that began in a solemn covenant to build, but could not finish; they had not stock enough either of true honour or honesty (tho' their stock of parts and opportunities was sufficient) to finish this work.

Let us therefore sit down seriously and count the cost; yea and consider whether we be willing to be at the cost. To lead you on in this, my humble advice is, that you would catechise your hearts upon the articles of this covenant. Put the question to your hearts, and let every one say this unto himself:

Am I indeed resolved sincerely, really and constantly, through the grace of God, in my place and calling, to endeavour the preservation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland? The reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland?

Am I indeed resolved in like manner, without respect of persons, to endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy?

Am I indeed resolved never to be withdrawn or divided by whatsoever terror or persuasion from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give myself to a detestable indifferency or neutrality in this cause of God?

Am I indeed resolved to humble myself for my own sins, and the sins of the kingdom? to amend myself, and all in my power, and to go before others in the example of a real reformation?

According to these hints, propose the question upon every clause of this covenant. And then consider what the cost of performing all these may amount to, and whether you are willing to go to that cost.

But it may be, some will say, what is this cost? I answer, the express letter of the covenant tells you of one cost which you must be constantly at, and that is sincere, real, and constant endeavour. Pains is a price, I am sure real pains is. The heathens said, "That their gods sold them all good things for labour." The good things of this covenant are sold at that rate; yea, this is the price which the true God puts upon those things which He freely gives. To consent to this covenant, to wish well to this covenant, to speak well of this covenant, come not up to the price; you must do these, and you must do more, you must be doing, so the promise of every man for himself runs, I will through the grace of God endeavour. Yet every endeavour is not current money, payable as the price of this covenant: there must be a threefold stamp upon it. Unless it bear the image and superscription of sincerity, reality, and constancy, it will not be accepted. For so the promise runs, "I will sincerely, really, and constantly endeavour."

Neither yet is this all. Such endeavours are virtually money; but as this covenant calls also for money formally, as the price of it, he that really endeavours after such ends, as here are proposed, must not only be at the cost of his pains, but also at the cost of his purse for the attainment of them. He must open his hand to give and to lend as well as to work and labour. Unless a man be free of his purse as well as of his pains, he bides not up to the demands of this covenant, nor pays up to his own promise when he

entered into it. Can that man be said really to endeavour the maintenance of a cause while he lets it starve? or, to strengthen it while he keeps the sinews of it close shut up? Would he have the chariot move swiftly, who only draws but will not oil the wheels? Know then and consider it that the cost you must be at is both in your labours and in your estates. The engagement runs to both these: and to more than both these.

The covenant engages us not only to do but to suffer, not only to endeavour but to endure. Such is the tenor of the sixth article where every man promises for himself that he will not suffer himself to be withdrawn from this blessed Union by any terrors. If not by any terror, then not by any losses, imprisonments, torments, no, nor by death, that king of terrors. You see, then, that the price of this covenant may be the price of blood, of liberty, and of life. Sit down and consider. Are you willing to be at this cost to build the tower? Through the goodness of God in ordering these great affairs, you may never come actually to pay down so much, haply, not half so much, but except you resolve (if called and put to it by the real exigencies of this cause) to pay down the utmost farthing, your spirits are too narrow and your hearts too low for the honour and tenor of this covenant. If any shall say these demands are very high and the charge very great, but is a part in this covenant worth it? Will it quit cost to be at so great a charge? Wise men love to see and have somewhat for their money; and when they see they will not stick at any cost so the considerations be valuable.

For the answering and clearing of this, I shall pass to the Second point which holds forth the grounds of a covenant from those words of the text, "And because of all this." If any one shall be troubled at the "All this" in the price, I doubt not but the "All this" in the grounds will satisfy

him. Because of all this, we make a sure covenant. Here observe:

1. A covenant must be grounded on reason: we must shew the cause why. God often descends, but man is bound, to give a reason of what he doeth. Some of God's actions are above reason, but none without reason. All our actions ought to be level with reason and with common reason, for it is a common act. That which men of all capacities are called to do, should lie in the reach of every man's capacity. Observe:

2. A covenant must be grounded on weighty reason; there must be much light in the reason (as was shewed before) but no lightness. "Because of all this" saith the text. There were many things in it, and much weight in every one of them.

And the reasons, in their proportion, must at least be as weighty as the conditions. Weighty conditions will never be balanced with light reasons. If a man ask a thousand pounds for a jewel, he is bound to demonstrate that his jewel is intrinsically worth so much, else no wise man will come up to his demands. So when great things are demanded to be paid down by all who take part in this covenant, we are obliged to demonstrate and hold forth an equivalent of worth in the grounds and nature of it. Hence observe

3. That the reasons of a covenant must be express, "Because of all this." *This* is demonstrative. Here's the matter laid before you, consider of it, examine it thoroughly. This is fair dealing, when a man sees why he undertakes, and what he may expect, before he is engaged. And so may say, "Because of this, and this, because of all this," I have entered into the covenant.

But what were the particulars that made up the gross sum of all this? I answer, those particulars lie scattered throughout the chapter, the attentive reader will easily find

them out; I shall in brief reduce them unto two heads. 1. The defection and corruptions that were crept in, or openly brought in among them. 2. The afflictions, troubles, and judgments that either were already fallen, or were feared would further fall upon them.

The former of these causes is laid down in the 34 and 35 verses of this chapter. "Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers kept Thy law, nor hearkened to Thy commandments, and Thy testimonies, wherewith Thou didst testify against them. For they have not served Thee in Thy kingdom, and in Thy great goodness."

The latter of these reasons is contained in the 36 and 37 verses. "Behold, we are servants this day; and for the land which Thou gavest unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it." The close of all is, we are in great distress. From this narrative of the grounds, the making of a covenant is inferred as a conclusion, in the immediate subsequent words of the text, "because of all this." As if he had said, "because we are a people who have so departed from the laws and statutes of our God, and are so corrupted both in worship, and in practice; because we are a people so oppressed in our estates, and liberties, and so distressed by judgments and afflictions: therefore, because of all this, we make a sure covenant."

And if we peruse the records of the holy Scripture, we shall find, that either both these grounds conjoined, or one of them, are expressed as the reasons at any time inducing the people of God, to enter into the bond of a covenant. This is evident in Asa's covenant, 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13. In Hezekiah's, 2 Chron. xxix. 10. In Josiah's, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30, 31. In Ezra's, chap. x. 3. To all which, I refer the reader for satisfaction. And, from all consenting with this in the text, I observe:

That when a people are corrupted or declined in doctrine,

worship, and manners; when they are distressed in their liberties, livelihoods, or lives; then, and at such a time they have warrantable and sufficient grounds to make and engage themselves (as their last and highest resort for redress) in the bonds of a sacred solemn covenant.

What engagement can be upon us, which these reasons do not reach and answer? The liberty of our persons, and of our estates, is worth much; but the liberty of the gospel and purity of doctrine and ordinances, are worth much more. Peace is a precious jewel, but who can value truth? The wise merchant will sell all that he hath with joy to buy this, and blesses God for the bargain.

And because of all this, we are called to make a covenant this day. Truth of doctrine and purity of worship were going, and much of them both were gone. The liberty of our persons, and property of our estates, were going, and much of them both were gone; we were at once growing popish and slavish, superstitious and servile: we were in these great distresses, "And because of all this we make a covenant this day." That these are the grounds of our covenant, is clear in the tenor of the covenant. The preamble whereof speaks thus:

"WE calling to mind the treacherous and bloody plots, conspiracies, attempts, and practices of the enemies of God, against the true religion and professors thereof, in all places, especially in these three kingdoms, ever since the reformation of religion: and how much their rage, power and presumption are of late, and at this time increased and exercised, whereof the deplorable estate of the church and kingdom of Ireland, the distressed estate of the church and kingdom of England, and the dangerous estate of the church and kingdom of Scotland, are present and public testimonies: we have now at the last, for the preservation of ourselves, and our religion, from utter ruin and destruction, after mature deliberation resolved and

determined to enter into a mutual and solemn league and covenant."

So then, if we be asked a reason of our covenant, here are reasons, clear reasons, easy to the weakest understanding, yea, open to every man's sense. Who amongst us hath not felt these reasons? and how many have smarted their proof unto us? And as these reasons are so plain, that the most illiterate and vulgar understandings may conceive them; so they are so weighty and cogent, that the most subtile and sublime understandings cannot but be subdued to them; unless, because they are such masters of reason, they have resolved to obey none. And yet where conscience is indeed unsatisfied, we should rather pity than impose, and labour to persuade, rather than violently to obtrude. Now seeing we have all this for the ground of a covenant, let us cheerfully and reverently make a sure covenant, which is the third point in the text, the property of this covenant: we make a sure covenant.

In the Hebrew, the word covenant is not expressed. The text runs only thus, we make a sure one, or a sure thing. Covenants are in their own nature and constitution, things of so much certainty and assurance, that by way of excellency, a covenant is called, a sure one, or an assurance. When a sure one is but named, a covenant must be understood. As, the "Holy One" is God, and the "Holy One and the Just," is Christ. You may know whom the Holy Ghost means, when He saith "The Holy One and the Just." So the sure one, is a covenant. You may know what they made, when the Holy Ghost saith, they made a sure one. Hence observe, that

A well grounded covenant is a sure, a firm, and an irrevocable act. When you have such an *all this*, (and such you have) as is here concentrated in the text, to lay into, or for the foundation of a covenant, the superstruction is *æternitati sacrum*, and must stand for ever.

A weak ground is but a weak obligation; and a sinful ground is no obligation. There is much sin in making a covenant upon sinful grounds, and there is more sin in keeping of it. But when the preservation of true religion, and the vindication of just liberties meet in the groundwork, ye may swear and not repent; yea, if ye swear, ye must not repent. For because of all such things as these, we ought (if we make any, and that we ought) to make a sure covenant.

The covenant God makes with man is a sure covenant. Hence called a "Covenant of salt," because salt preserves from perishing and putrefaction. The covenant of God with man about temporal things, is called a "Covenant of Salt, and a covenant forever." For tho' His covenant about temporal things (as all temporals must) hath an end of termination, yet it hath no end of corruption: time will conclude it, but time cannot violate it. But as for His covenant about eternal things, that, like eternity, knows not only no end of corruption, but none of termination. "Altho' my house (saith gasping David) be not so with God; yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, altho' He make it not to grow." And what is it that makes the covenant of God with man thus sure? sure not only in itself, but (as the apostle speaks) to all the seed. Is it not this, because it hath a strong foundation, a double, impregnable foundation? *First*, His own free grace. *Second*, The blood of Christ; which is therefore also called, the blood of the covenant. Because of all this, this all, which hath an infinity in it, the Lord God hath made with us a sure covenant.

Now, as the stability and everlastingness of God's covenant with His elect, lies in the strength of the foundation, "His own love, and the blood of His Son:" so the stability and firmness of our covenant with God, lies in the strength of this foundation, the securing of the gospel, and the asserting

of gospel-purity in worship, and privileges in government; the securing of our lives, and the asserting of our common liberties. When at any time ye can question, and, from the oracles of truth, be resolved, that these are sufficient grounds of making a covenant, or that these are not ours, ye may go, and unassure the covenant which ye make this day.

Application. Let me therefore invite you in the words of the prophet Jeremiah, "Come let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant that shall never be forgotten." And do not these look like the days wherein the prophet calls to the doing of this? "In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord." What time, and what days were those? the beginning of the chapter answers. "The word that the Lord spake against Babylon, declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard, publish and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bell is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces: for out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate." Then follows, "In those days and at that time saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come. And they shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."

Are not these the days, and this the time (I speak not of time to a day, but of time and days) wherein the Lord speaks against Babylon, and against the land of the Chaldeans: wherein He saith, "Declare among the nations, and publish, and set up the standard." Are not these the days, and this the time, when out of the north there cometh up a nation against her? As face answers face in the water, so do the events of these days answer, if not the letter, yet much of the mystery of this prophecy. There seems wanting only the work which this day is bringing forth, and a few days more (I hope) will bring unto perfection, the

joining of ourselves in a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten. It is very observable, how the prophet, as it were, with one breath saith, "Babylon is taken." And, "Come let us join ourselves in covenant." As if there were no more in it but this, take the covenant, and ye take Babylon. Or, as if the taking of a covenant were the ready way, the readiest way to take Babylon. Surely at the report of the taking of this sure covenant, we in our prayer-visions (as the prophet Habakkuk), "May see the tents of Cushan in affliction, and the curtains of the land of Midian tremble." Or, as Moses in his triumphant song, "The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold of the inhabitants of Palestina. The dukes of Edom shall be amazed: the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them: the inhabitants of Canaan (who are now the inhabitants of Babylon) shall melt away. The towers of Babylon shall quake, and her seven hills will move. The great mountain before our Zerubbabel, will become a plain, and we shall bring forth the head-stone (of our reformation) with shouting, crying, grace, grace unto it." Why may we not promise to ourselves such glorious effects (and not build these castles in the air) when we have laid so promising a foundation, this sure covenant, and have made a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten?

The three things I shall propose, which this covenant will bring in, as facilitating contributions to so great a work:

1. This covenant will distinguish men, and separate the precious from the vile. In the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel, the Lord promiseth His people, after this manner, "I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." The phrase of causing to pass under the rod, is an allusion to shepherds, or the keepers of cattle, who when they would take special notice of their sheep or cattle, either in their number to tithe them, or in their goodness to try them, they brought them into a fold,

or some other inclosed place, when letting them pass out at a narrow door, one by one, they held a rod over them, to count or consider more distinctly of them. This action was called a "passing of them under the rod," as Moses teaches us, "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord." The learned Junius expounds that text in Ezekiel by this in Leviticus, giving the sense thus, "As if the Lord had said, I will prove and try the whole people of Israel, as a shepherd doeth his flock, that I may take the good and sound into the fold of My covenant, and cast out the wicked and unsound." Which interpretation is not only favoured, but fully approved, in the words immediately following, "I will bring you into the bond of the covenant, and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against Me."

A covenant is to a nation, as a fan to the floor, which purges away the chaff and purifies the wheat. It is like the furnace to the metal, which takes away the dross and shews you a refined lump. It is a Shibboleth, to distinguish Ephraimites from Gileadites. And who knows not how great an advantage it is for the successful carrying on of any honourable design, to know friends from enemies, and the faithful from false brethren? Some have thought it unpolitical to set-a-foot this covenant, lest it should discover more enemies than friends, and so holding out to the view more than otherwise can be seen, the weakness of a party may render them, not only more obnoxious, but more inconsiderable.

To this I answer, in a word, invisible enemies will ever do us more hurt than visible; and if we cannot deliver ourselves from them, when they are seen and known, doubtless unseen and unknown, they will more easily, tho more insensibly devour us. And I verily believe, we have already received more damage and deeper wounds from

pretended friends, than from professed and open enemies. The sad stories of Abner and Amasa inform us, that there is no fence against his stroke, who comes too near us, who stabs while he takes us aside to speak kindly to us, who draws his sword, while he hath a kiss at his lips, and art thou in health, my brother, at his tongue. Let us never think ourselves stronger, because we do not know our weakness; or safer, because we are ignorant of our danger. Or that our real enemies and false friends will do us less hurt, because they are less discovered. I do not think, that a flock ever fared the better, because the wolves that were amongst them, went in sheep's clothing. Rather will our knowledge be our security, and the discovery which this covenant makes, help on both our deliverance and our business. For as, possibly, this covenant may discover those who are faithful to be fewer, than was supposed before this strict distinction from others; so it will certainly make them stronger than they were before, by a stricter union among themselves. And this is

2. The second benefit of this covenant, which I shall next insist upon. As it doth separate those who are heterogeneal, so likewise it will congregate and embody those who are homogeneal. And therefore it cannot but add strength unto a people; for whatsoever unites, strengthens. A few united, are stronger than a scattered multitude. Tho' they who subscribe this covenant should be, comparatively, so few, as the prophet speaks, "That a child may write them;" yet this few thus united are stronger than so many scattered ones, as exceed all arithmetic, whom (as John speaks,) "No man can number." Cloven tongues were sent, to publish the gospel, but not divided tongues, much less divided hearts: the former hindered the building of Babel, and the latter, tho' tongues should agree, will hinder the building of Jerusalem. Then a work goes on amain, when the undertakers, whether they

be few or many, all speak and think the same thing. A people are more considerable in any work, because they are one, than because they are many. But when many and one meet, nothing can stand before them. So the Lord God observed, when "He came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded." And the Lord said, "Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language: and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." Men may do as much as they can think, while they all think and do as one; and not only can such do great things, if let alone; but none can let them in doing what they intend; so saith the Lord, "They have begun to do, and nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined." Nothing could restrain, or let them from their work, but His power, who "will work, and none can let it." Thus it is apparent that union is our strength. And it is as apparent that this covenant, through the blessing of God upon it, will be our union. To unite, is the very nature of a covenant. Hence it is called "the bond of the covenant, I will bring you into the bond of the covenant," saith the Lord. Junius and some others render it, I will bring you *(ad exhibitionem fœderis)* to the giving or tendering of the covenant: deriving the word from *Masar*, signifying, to exhibit or deliver. Whence (to note that in passage) the traditionary doctrine among the Jews is called *Masora*, or *Masoreth*. Others (whom our translators fellow, and put the former sense, delivering, in the margin) others, I say, deriving the word from *Asar* to bind, render it the bond of the covenant.

And this covenant is the bond of a twofold union. *First*, It unites us of this kingdom among ourselves, and this kingdom with the other two. *Second*, It makes a special union of all those who shall take it holily and sincerely throughout the three kingdoms with the one-most God.

Weak things bound together, are strong, much more then, when strong are bound up with strong: most of all, when strong are bound up with Almighty. If in this covenant, we should only join weak to weak, we might be strong. But, blessed be God, we join strong, as creatures may be accounted strong, with strong. The strong kingdoms of England and Ireland, with the strong kingdom of Scotland. A threefold cord twisted of three such strong cords, will not easily, if at all, be broken. They which single, blessed be God, have yet such strength, how strong may they be when conjoined? as the apostle writes, "I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh:" so I speak now after the manner of men, concerning the strength of our flesh, outward means, in these kingdoms. For as the apostle Peter speaks in like phrase, tho' to another occasion, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness:" so I may say, no man, no kingdoms, are strong to any purpose, as the Lord counts strength.

And therefore, I reckon this the least part of our strength, that these three strong kingdoms will be united by this covenant. Nay, if this were all the strength, which this union were like to make, I should reckon this no strength at all. Wherefore, know that this covenant undoubtedly is, and will be a bond of union between strong and Almighty: between three strong nations, and an Almighty God. This covenant engages more than man, God also is engaged: engaged, through His free grace, in His power, wisdom, faithfulness, to do us good, and much good, tho' in and of ourselves unworthy of the least, unworthy of any good.

All this considered, this covenant will be our strength: our brethren of Scotland have, in a plentiful experience, found it so already. This covenant, thro' the blessing of God upon their councils and endeavours, hath been their Samson's lock, the thing in fight, wherein their strength lieth. And why should not we hope, that it will be ours; if we can be

wise, as they, to prevent or overcome the flattering enticements of those Delilahs who would lull us asleep in their laps, only for an opportunity to cut or shave it off? Then indeed, which God forbid, we should be but weak like other men, yea, weaker than ourselves were before this lock was grown, having but the strength of man; God utterly departing from us, for our falseness and unfaithfulness in this covenant.

3. This covenant observed will make us an holy people, and then, we cannot be an unhappy people. That which promotes personal holiness, must needs promote national holiness. The consideration that we are in the bonds of a covenant, is both a bridle to stop us from sin, and a spur to duty. When we provoke God to bring evil upon us, He stays His hand by considering His covenant. "I will remember My covenant, saith the Lord, which is between Me, and you; and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh." As if the Lord had said, It is more than probable, that I shall quickly see as much cause, "all flesh corrupting all their ways before Me," to drown the world with a second deluge, as I did for the first: the foulness of the world, will quickly call for another washing. But I am resolved, never to destroy it by water again; for, "I will remember My covenant." Hence also in the second book of the Chronicles, chap. xxi. where the reign and sins of Jehoram are recorded; such sins as might justly put a sword into the hand of God to cut him off root and branch; howbeit, saith the text, "The Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that He had made with David, and as He promised to give a light to him, and to his sons forever." Now, as the remembrance of the covenant on His part, stays the hand of God from smiting; so the remembrance of the covenant on our part, will be very effectual to stay our hands, and tongues, and hearts from

sinning. A thought of that will damp and silence our lusts and passions, when they begin to move or quest within us: it will also break the blow of Satan's temptations, when he assaults us. The soul in such cases will answer, True, I am now as strongly tempted to sin as ever, I have now as fair an opportunity to commit sin as ever, I could now be false to, and desert this cause with as much advantage, upon as fair hopes and promises as ever: O! but I am in covenant, I remember my covenant, I will not, I cannot do it; and so he falls a praying against the temptation: yea, he begs prayers of others, that he may be strengthened against, and overcome it. I read you an instance of this effect Before the sermon, a paper is sent to this congregation, containing this request: "One who through much passion oftentimes grievously offends the Majesty of God by cursing and swearing, and that since his late taking the covenant, desires the prayers of this congregation, that his offence may be pardoned, and that he may be enabled to overcome that temptation from henceforwards." This is the tenor of that request, to a letter and a tittle, and therein you see how the remembrance of the covenant wrought. Probably this party (whosoever he was) took little notice of, or was little troubled at the notice of these distempers in himself before; least of all sought out for help against them. And I have the rather inserted this to confute that scorn which, I hear, some have since put upon that conscientious desire. As if one had complained, that since his swearing to the covenant he could not forbear swearing, and that this sacred oath had taught him profane ones. But what holy thing is there which swine will not make mire of, for themselves to wallow in? I return; and I nothing doubt, but that this covenant, wherein all is undertaken through the grace of Christ, will make many more gracious who had grace before, and turn others, who were running on amain in the broad way, from the evil and error of their ways, into the way which is called

holy, or into the ways of holiness. Every act wherein we converse with an holy God, hath an influence upon our spirits to make us holy. The soul is made more holy in prayer, tho' holiness be not the particular matter of the prayer: a man gets much of heaven into his heart, in praying for earthly things, if he pray in a spiritual manner; and the reason is because, in prayer, he hath converse with, and draws nigh to God, whatsoever lawful thing he prays about. And the same reason carries it in covenanting, tho' it were only about the maintenance of our outward estates and liberties, forasmuch as therein we have to do with God. How much more then will holiness be increased through this covenant which, in many branches of it, is a direct covenant for, and about holiness? And if we improve it home to this purpose, for the subduing of those mystical Canaanites, those worst and indeed most formidable enemies, our sinful lusts: if we improve it for the obtaining of more grace, and the making of us more holy: tho' our visible Canaanites should not only continue unsubdued by us, but subdue us; though our estates and liberties should continue, not only unrecovered, but quite lost; tho' we should neither be a rich, nor a free, nor a victorious people; yet if we are an holy people, we have more than all these, we have all, He is ours, "Who is all in all." So much of the first general part of the application.

The second is for admonition and caution, in three or four particulars.

1. Take heed of "profaning this covenant," by an unholy life. Remember you have made a covenant with heaven; then do not live as if you had made a "covenant with hell or were come to an agreement with death," as the prophet Isaiah characters those monsters of profaneness. Take heed also of "corrupting this covenant," by an unholy gloss. Wo be unto those glossers that corrupt the text, pervert the meaning of these words: who attempt to expound the

covenant by their own practice, and will not regulate their practice by the covenant. The apostle Peter speaks of Paul's writings, "That in them some things are hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction." We may fear, that tho' the text of this covenant be easy to be understood, yet some (who, at least think themselves learned), and whom we have found not only stable but stiffened in their own erroneous principles and opinions, will be trying their skill, if not their malice, to wrest, or, as the Greek imports, to torture and set this covenant upon the rack, to make it speak and confess a sense never intended by the composers, or proposers of it: and whereof (if but common ingenuity be the judge) it never will, nor can be found guilty. All that I shall say to such is that in the close of the verse quoted from the apostle Peter, let them take heed such wrestings be not (worst to themselves, even) to their own destruction.

2. Take heed of delaying to perform the duties of this covenant. Some, I fear, who have made haste to take the covenant, will take leasure to act it. It is possible, that a man may make too much haste (when he swears, before he considers what it is) to take an oath: but, having taken it upon due consideration, he cannot make too much haste to perform it. "Be not rash with thy mouth," saith the preacher. That is, do not vow rashly, but, "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it: for He hath no pleasure in fools (slow performance is folly); pay that which thou hast vowed." Speedy paying (like speedy giving) is double payment: whereas slow payment is no payment or as bad as none, for it is foolish payment. A bond, if I mistake not, is presently due in law, if no day be specified in the bond. It is so I am sure in this covenant; here is no day set down, and therefore all is due the same day you take it. God and man may sue this bond presently

for non-payment: the covenant gives no day, and therefore requires the next day, every day. It is not safe to take day for payment, when the obligation is *in terminis de præsenti*, and none is given.

3. Take heed of dallying with this covenant. It is more than serious, a sacred covenant. It is very dangerous jesting with edged tools. This covenant is as keen as it is strong. Do not play fast and loose with it, be not in and out with it; God is an avenger of all such: He is a jealous God, and will not hold them guiltless, who thus take His name in vain. They who swear by, or to the Lord, and swear by Malcham, are threatened to be cut off. To be on both sides, and to be on no side; neutrality and indifferency differ little, either in their sin or danger.

4. Above all, take heed of apostatizing from, or an utter desertion of, this covenant. To be deserted of God, is the greatest punishment, and to desert God, is the greatest sin. When you have set your hands to the plough, do not look back: remember Lot's wife. Besides the sin, this is, *First*, Extremely base and dishonourable. It is one of the brands set upon those Gentiles whom "God had given up to a reprobate mind, and to vile affections," that they were covenant breakers. And how base is that issue which is begotten between, and born from vile affections, and a reprobate mind? where the parents are such, it is easy to judge what the child must be. *Second*, Besides the sin and the dishonour, this is extremely dangerous and destructive. We are said in the native speaking, to cut a covenant, or to strike a covenant, when we make it; and if we break the covenant when we have made it, it will both strike and cut us, it will kill and slay us. If the cords of this covenant do not bind us, the cords of this covenant will whip us; and whip us, not as with cords, but as with scorpions. The covenant will have a quarrel with, and sends out a challenge unto such breakers of it, for reparation. And (if I may so

speak) the great God will be its second. As God revenges the quarrel of His own covenant, so likewise the quarrel of ours. He hath already "Sent a sword to revenge the quarrel of His covenant." He will send another to revenge the quarrel of this upon the wilful violators of it. Yea, every lawful covenant hath a curse always waiting upon it, like a marshal or a sergeant, to attack such high contemners of it. It was noted before from the ceremony of killing, dividing, and passing between the divided parts of a beast, when covenants were made, that the imprecation of a curse upon the covenanters was implied, in case they wilfully transgressed or revolted from it. Let the transgressors of, and revolters from this covenant, fear and tremble at the same curse, even the curse of a dreadful division: "That God will divide them and their posterity in Jacob, and scatter them in our Israel; yea, let them fear, that God will rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling wind before the whirlwind. This is (their portion, and) the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us." And if so, is not their lot fallen in an unpleasant place? have they not a dreadful heritage? to be under any curse is misery enough; but to be under a covenant curse, is the greatest, is all misery. For as the blessings we receive are most sweet, when they pass to us through the hands of a covenant; a mercy from a promise is far better than a mercy from bare Providence, because then it is sprinkled with the blood of Christ: so on the other side, the curse which falls upon any one is far more bitter when it comes through a covenant, especially an abused, a broken covenant. When the fiery beams of God's wrath are contracted into this burning glass, it will burn as low as hell, and none can quench it. That alone which quenches the fire of God's wrath is the blood of Christ. And the blood of Christ is the foundation of this covenant.

Not only is that covenant which God hath made with us founded in the blood of Christ, but that also which we make with God. Were it not by the blood of Christ, we could not possibly be admitted to so high a privilege. Seeing then the blood of Christ only quenches the wrath of God, and this blood is the foundation of our covenant, how shall the wrath of God (except they repent, return and renew their covenant) be quenched towards such violators of it? And, as our Saviour speaks upon another occasion, "If the light which is in them be darkness, how great is that darkness?" So, I say, if that which is our friend turn upon us as an emeny, how great is that enmity; and if that which is our mercy be turned into wrath, how great is that wrath, and who can quench it? It is said of good king Josiah, that when he had made a covenant before the Lord, "he caused all that were present in Jerusalem, and in Benjamin, to stand to it." How far he interposed his regal authority, I stay not to dispute. But he caused them to stand to it; that is openly to attest, and to maintain it. Methinks the consideration of these things, should reign over the hearts of men, and command in their spirits, more than any prince can over the tongues or bodies of men, to cause them to stand to this covenant. Ye that have taken this covenant, unless ye stand to it, ye will fall by it. I shall shut up this point with that of the apostle, "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, when ye have done all, to stand," (Eph. vi. 13). Stand, and withstand, are the watchword of this covenant, or the impress of every heart which hath or shall sincerely swear unto it.

For the helping of you to stand to this covenant, I shall cast in a few advices about your walking in this covenant, or your carriage in it, which, if followed, I dare say, through the mercy of the Most High, your persons, these kingdoms, and this cause, shall not miscarry.

1. Walk in holiness and uprightness. When God renewed His covenant with Abraham, He makes this the preamble of it, "I am the Almighty God, walk before Me, and be thou perfect, and I will make My covenant between Me and thee." As this must be a covenant of salt, in regard of faithfulness; so there must be salt in this covenant, even the salt of holiness and uprightness. The Jews were commanded in all their offerings to use salt; and that is called the salt of the covenant, "Every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season with salt, neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking." What is meant by salt on our parts, is taught us by Christ Himself, "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another." Which I take to be parallel in sense with that of the apostle, "Follow peace with all men and holiness." As salt, the shadow of holiness, was called for, in all those Jewish services; so holiness, the true substantial salt, is called for in all ours. As then it was charged, "Let not the salt of the covenant of thy God be lacking:" so now it is charged, "Suffer not the salt of thy covenant with God and His people to be lacking." Seeing we have made a covenant of salt, that is, a sure covenant, let us remember to keep salt in our covenant. Let us add salt to salt, our salt to the Lord's salt, our salt of holiness to His salt of faithfulness, and we shall not miscarry.

2. Walk steadily or stedfastly in this covenant. Where the heart is upright and holy, the feet will be steady. Unstedfastness is a sure argument of unsoundness, as well as a fruit of it. "Their heart was not right with Him; neither were they stedfast in His covenant." As if He had said, would you know the reason why this people were so unstedfast? It was, because they were so unsound. "Their heart was not right with Him." We often see the

diseases of men's hearts breaking forth at their lips, and at their finger ends, in all they say or do.

God will be steady to us; why should not we resolve to be so to Him? and this covenant will be stedfast and uniform unto us, why should not we resolve to be so too, and in this covenant? The covenant will not be our friend to-day, and our enemy to-morrow, do us good to-day, and hurt to-morrow, it will not be the fruitful this year, and barren the next; but it is our friend to do us good to-day, and ever. It is fruitful and will be so for ever. We need not let it lie fallow, we cannot take out the heart of it, tho' we should have occasion to plough it, and sow it every year. Much less will this covenant be so unstedfast to its own principles, as to yield us wheat to-day, and cockle to-morrow, an egg to-day, and to-morrow a scorpion; now bread, and anon a stone; now give us an embrace, and anon a wound; now help on our peace, and anon embroil us; now prosper our reformation, and anon oppose, or hinder it; strengthen us this year, and weaken us the next. No, as it will never be barren, so it will ever bring forth the same fruit, and that good fruit; and the more and the longer we use it, the better fruit. Like the faithful wife, "It will do us good, and not evil, all the days of its life." It is therefore, not only sinful, but most unsuitable and uningenuous, for us to be up and down, forward and backward, liking and disliking, like that double minded man, "Unstable in all our ways," respecting the duties of this covenant.

3. Walk believingly, live much in the exercise of faith. As we have no more good out of the covenant of God, than we have faith in it; so no more good out of our own, than (in a due sense) we have faith in it. There is as much need of faith, to improve this covenant, as there is of faithfulness. We live no more in the sphere of a covenant, than we believe. And we can make no living out of it but

by believing. All our earnings come in here also, more by our faith, than by our works. Let not the heart of God be straitened, and His hand shortened by our unbelief. Where Christ marvelled at the unbelief of a people, consider what a marvel followed: Omnipotence was as one weak. "He could do no mighty works among them." Works less than mighty will not reach our deliverances or procure our mercies. The ancient worthies made more use of their faith, than to be saved, and get to heaven by it. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down. By faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, (or exercised justice) stopped the mouths of lions. By faith they quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness they were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." We have Jerichos to reduce, and kingdoms to subdue, under the sceptre and government of Jesus Christ: we have justice to execute, and the mouths of lions to stop: we have a violent fire to quench, a sharp edged sword to escape, Popish alien armies to fight with; and we (comparatively to these mighty works) are but weak. How then shall we out of our weakness become strong, strong enough to carry us through these mighty works, strong enough to escape these visible dangers? If we walk and work by sense, and not by faith? And if we could get through all these works and dangers without faith, we should work but like men, not at all like Christians, but like men in a politic combination, not in a holy covenant. There's not a stroke of covenant work (purely so called) can be done without faith. As fire is to the chemist, so is faith to a covenant people. In that capacity, they can do nothing for themselves without it; and they have, they can have, no assurance that God will. Seeing then we are in covenant, we must go to counsel by faith, and to war by faith; we must pull down by faith, and build by faith; we must reform by faith, and settle our peace by faith. Besides,

to do a work so solemn and sacred, and then not to believe and expect no fruit; yea, then to believe and expect answerable fruit, is a direct taking of God's name in vain, and a mock to Jesus Christ. And if we mock Christ by calling Him to a covenant, which we ourselves slight, as a thing we expect little or nothing from: "He will laugh at our calamity," and "mock when our fear cometh." Wherefore to close, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established," no, not by this sure covenant. But, "believe in the Lord your God, in covenant, so shall you be established; believe His prophets, so shall you prosper."

4. Walk cheerfully. So it becomes those that have God so near them. Such, even in their sorrows, should be like Paul, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." The (as) notes not a counterfeiting of sorrow, but the overcoming of sorrow. On this ground David resolves against the fear of evil, tho' he should see nothing but evil; "Tho' I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me." In a covenant, God and man meet; He is with us who is more than all that are against us: and when He is with us, who can be against us? For then all things, and all persons, even while (to the utmost of their skill and power) they set themselves against us, work for us; and should not we rejoice? If we knew that every loss were our gain, every wound our healing, every disappointment our success, every defeat our victory, would we not rejoice? Do but know what it is to be in covenant with God: and be sad, be hopeless, if you can. It is to have the strength and counsels of heaven engaged for you; it is to have Him for you, "Whose foolishness is wiser than men, and whose weakness is stronger than men." It is to have Him with you, "who doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou?" It is to have Him with you, "who frustrateth the

tokens of the liars, and maketh the diviners mad. who turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish." It is to have Him with you, before whom "the nations are as the drop of a bucket, and as the dust of the balance, who taketh up the isles as a very little thing." In a word, it is to have Him with you, "who fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, He increaseth strength." This God is our God, our God in covenant; "This is our beloved and this is our Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." And shall we not rejoice? Shall we not walk cheerfully? Tho' there be nothing but trouble before our eyes, yet our hearts should live in those upper regions, which are above storms and tempests, above rain and winds, above the noise and confusions of the world. Why should sorrow sit clouded in our faces, or any darkness be in our hearts, while we are in the shine and light of God's countenance? It is said, "That all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart:" If we have sworn heartily, we shall rejoice heartily. And for ever banish base fears, and killing sorrows from our hearts; and wipe them from our faces. They, who have unworthy fears in their hearts, give too fair an evidence that they did not swear with their hearts.

5. Walk humbly and dependently; rejoice, but be not secure. Trust to God in covenant, not to your covenant. Make not your covenant your Christ; no, not for this temporal salvation. As a horse trusted to, is a vain thing to save a man, so likewise is a covenant trusted to; neither can it deliver a nation by its great strength: tho' indeed the strength of it be greater than the strength of many horses. "In vain is salvation hoped for from this hill, or from a multitude of mountains," heaped up and joined in one by the bond of this covenant. Surely in the Lord our God, our God in covenant, is the salvation of England. We

cannot trust too much in God, nor too little in the creature; there is nothing breaks the staff of our help, but our leaning upon it. If we trust in our covenant, we have not made it with God, but we have made it a god; and every god of man's making, is an idol, and so nothing in the world: you see, pride in, or trust to this covenant will make it an idol, and then in doing all this, we have done nothing; for "an idol is nothing in the world." And of nothing, comes nothing. By overlooking to the means, we lose all; and by all our travail shall bring forth nothing but wind: it will not work any deliverance in the land. Wherefore, "rest not in the thing done, but get up, and be doing," which is the last point, and my last motion about your walking in covenant.

6. Walk industriously and diligently in this covenant. You were counselled before to stand to the covenant, but take heed of standing in it. Stand, as that is opposed to defection; but if you stand as that is opposed to action, you are at the next door to falling. A total neglect is little better than total apostasy.

We have made a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten, as was shewed out of the prophet. It is a rule, that words in scripture, which express only an act of memory, include action and endeavours. When the young man is warned to "remember his Creator in the days of his youth," he is also charged to love, and to obey Him. And while we say, this covenant is never to be forgotten; we mean, the duties of it are ever to be pursued, and, to the utmost of our power, fulfilled. As soon as it is said that Josiah made all the people stand to the covenant; the very next words are, "and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers." They stood to it, but they did not, like those, "stand all the day idle;" they fell to work presently. And so let us. Having laid this foundation, a sure covenant, now let us arise and

build, and let our hands be strong. Do not think that all is done, when this solemnity is done, It is a sad thing to observe how some, when they have lifted up their hands, and written down their names, think presently their work is over. They think, now surely they have satisfied God and man for they have subscribed the covenant.

I tell you, nay, for when you have done taking the covenant, then your work begins. When you have done taking the covenant, then you must proceed to acting the covenant. When an apprentice has subscribed his name, and sealed his indentures, doth he then think his service is ended? No, then he knows his service doth begin. It is so here. We are all sealing the indentures of a sacred and noble apprenticeship to God, to these churches and common-wealths; let us then go to our work, as bound, yet free. Free to our work, not from it; free in our work, working from a principle of holy ingenuity, not of servility, or constraint. The Lord threatens them with bondage and captivity, who will not be servants in their covenant, with readiness and activity. "I, saith the Lord, will give the men that have transgressed My covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant, which they had made before Me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof; the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf, I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and their dead bodies shall be meat to the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the earth." Words that need no rhetoric to press them, nor any comment to explain them: they are so plain, that every one may understand them; and so severe, that every one, who either transgresses, or performs not, who doeth any thing against, or nothing for the words of this covenant, hath just cause to tremble at the reading of them:

I am sure, to feel them will make him tremble. Seeing then our princes, our magistrates, our ministers, and our people, have freely consented to, written, and sworn this covenant; let us all in our several places, be up and doing, that the Lord may be with us; not sit still and do nothing, and so cause the Lord to turn against us.

You that are for consultation, go to counsel; you that are for execution, go on to acting; you that are for exhorting the people in this work, attend to exhortation; you that are soldiers, draw your swords; you that have estates, draw your purses; you that have strength of body, lend your hands; and all you that have honest hearts, lend your prayers, your cries, your tears, for the prosperous success of this great work. And the Lord prosper the works of all our hands, the Lord prosper all our handy-works. *Amen.*

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

SERMON AT LONDON.

*BY THOMAS CASE.**

"And I will bring a sword upon you that shall avenge the quarrel of My covenant."—*Lev.* xxvi. 25.

SINCE covenant-violation is a matter of so high a quarrel as for the avenging whereof, God sends a sword upon a church or nation: for which, it is more than probable, the sword is upon us at this present, it having almost devoured Ireland already, and eaten up a great part of England also, let us engage our council, and all the interest we have in heaven and earth, for the taking up of this controversy; let us consider what we have to do, what way there is yet left us, for the reconciling of this quarrel, else we, and our families, are but the children of death and destruction: this sword that is drawn, and devoured so much Christian protestant flesh already, will, it is to be feared, go quite thro' the land, and, in the pursuit of this quarrel, cut off the remnant, till our land be so desolate, and our cities

* Mr. Case, a member of the Westminster Assembly, gave this sermon and the one that follows, at the taking of the Covenant in Milk Street Church, London; the former on Saturday evening, 30th September, 1643, and the other on 1st October, on "the Sabbath-day in the morning," immediately before the Covenant was taken. Both sermons, together with one on the Fast, 27th September, were dedicated to the Commissioners from the Church of Scotland to the Westminster Assembly.

waste, and England be made as Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of the fierce anger of Jehovah.

Somewhat I have spoken already in the former use, to this purpose viz. "To acknowledge our iniquities that we have transgressed against the Lord our God." To get our hearts broken, for breaking the covenant; to lay it so to heart, that God may not lay it to our charge. But this looks backward. Somewhat must be done, *de futuro:* for time to come: that may not only compose the quarrel, but lay a sure foundation of an after peace between God and the kingdom. And for that purpose, a mean lies before us; an opportunity is held forth unto us by the hand of divine wisdom and goodness, of known use and success among the people of God in former times; which is yet to me a gracious intimation, and a farther argument of hope from heaven, that God has not sworn against us in His wrath, nor sealed us up a people devoted to destruction, but hath yet a mind to enter into terms of peace and reconciliation with us, to receive us into grace and favour, to become our God, and to own us for His people; if yet, we will go forth to meet Him, and accept of such honourable terms as shall be propounded to us: and that is, by renewing our covenant with Him; yea, by entering into a more full and firm covenant than ever heretofore. For, as the quarrel was raised about the covenant, so it must be a covenant more solid and substantial, that must compose the quarrel, as I shall show you hereafter. And that is the service and the privilege that lies before us; the work of the next day. So that, me-thinks, I hear this use of exhortation, which now I would commend unto you speaking unto us in that language; "Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." It is the voice of the children of Israel, and the children of Judah, returning out of captivity. "The children of Israel shall come, they, and the children of Judah together; seeking the

Lord," whom they had lost, and inquiring the way to Zion; from whence their idolatry and adulteries had cast them out; themselves become now like the doves of the valley, mourning and weeping, because they had perverted their way, and forgotten the Lord their God. "Going and weeping they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward." And if you inquire when this should be? The fourth verse tells you, in those days. And if you ask again, what days those are? Interpreters will tell us of a threefold day, wherein this prophecy or promise is to be fulfilled: that is, the literal or inchoative, evangelical or spiritual, universal or perfect day.

The first day is a literal or inchoative day, here prophesied of, and that is already past, past long since; viz., in that day wherein the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity expired; then was this prophecy or promise begun in part to be accomplished: at what time the captivity of Judah, and divers of Israel with them, upon their return out of Babylon, kept a solemn fast at the river "Ahava, to afflict their souls before their God." There may you see them going and weeping, "to seek of Him a right way for them, and their little ones." There you have them seeking the Lord, and inquiring the way to Zion with their faces thither- ward. And when they came home, you may hear some of their nobles and priests, calling upon them to enter into covenant; so Shechaniah spake unto Ezra, the princes, and the people, "We have sinned against the Lord, . . . yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God." And so you may find the Levites calling the people to confess their sins with weeping and supplications, in a day of humiliation, and at the end of it, to write, and swear, and seal a covenant with "the Lord their God." This was the

first day wherein this prophecy began to be fulfilled, in the very letter thereof.

The second day is the evangelical day, wherein this promise is fulfilled in a gospel or spiritual sense; namely, when the elect of God, of what nation or language soever, being all called the Israel of God, as is prophesied, "One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, . . . and surname himself by the name of Israel." I say, when these in their several generations and successions shall turn to the Lord their God, either from their Gentilism and paganism, as in their first conversion to Christianity; as Tertullian observes after the resurrection of Christ, and the mission of the Holy Ghost; *Aspice exinde universas nationes ex veragine erroris humani emergentes ad Dominum Deum, et ad Dominum Christum ejus.* From that day forward, you might behold poor creatures of all nations and languages, creeping out of their dark holes and corners of blindness and idolatry, and betaking them to God and His Son Jesus Christ, as to their Law-giver and Saviour; or else turning from Antichristian superstition, and false ways of worship, as in the after and more full conversion of churches or persons purging themselves more and more, from the corruptions and mixtures of popery and superstitions, according to the degree of light and conviction, which should break out upon them, and asking the way to Zion, *i.e.*, the pure way of gospel worship, according to the fuller and clearer manifestations and revelations of the mind of Christ in the gospel. This was fulfilled in Luther's time, and in all those after separations which any of the churches have made from Rome, and from those relics and remains of superstition and will-worship, wherewith themselves and the ordinances of Jesus Christ have been defiled.

The third day wherein this prophecy or promise is to be made good, is that universal day, wherein both Jew and

Gentile shall be converted unto the Lord. That day of the restitution of all things, as some good divines conceive when "ten men out of all languages of the nations, shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you." And to what purpose is more fully expressed in the former verses, answering the prophecy in the text. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, it shall come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts; I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord."

This I call the universal day, because, as you see, there shall be such an abundance of confluence of cities, and people, and nations, combining together in an holy league and covenant, to seek the Lord. And a perfect day, because the mind and will of the Lord shall be fully revealed and manifested to the saints, concerning the way of worship and government in the churches. The new Jerusalem, *i.e.* the perfect, exact, and punctual model of the government of Christ in the churches, shall then be let down from Heaven. "The light of the moon being then to be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."

By what hath been spoken, you may perceive under which of these days we are: past indeed the first, but not yet arrived at the third day; and therefore under the second day, that evangelical day; yet so, as if all the three days were met together in ours, while it seems to me, that we are upon the dawning of the third day: and this prophecy falling so pat, and full upon our times, as if we were not got beyond the literal; a little variation will do it.

The children of Israel, and the children of Judah: Scotland and England, newly coming out of Babylon, antichristian Babylon, papal tyranny and usurpations, in one degree or other, going and weeping in the days of their solemn humiliations, bewailing their backslidings and rebellions, to seek the Lord their God, to seek pardon and reconciliation, to seek His face and favour, not only in the continuance, but in the more full and sweet influential manifestations of His presence among them; and to that end, asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward; that is, inquiring after the pure way of gospel worship, with full purpose of heart; that when God shall reveal His mind to them, they will conform themselves to His mind according to that blessed prophecy and promise, "He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." And that they may make all sure, that they may secure God and themselves against all future apostasies and backslidings, calling one upon another, and echoing back one to another: "Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."

You see by this time I have changed my text, tho' not my project; to which purpose I shall remember that, in the handling of these words, I must not manage my discourse, as if I were to make a new entire sermon upon the text, but only to improve the happy advantages it holds forth, for the pursuit and driving on of my present use of exhortation. Come, let us join. To this end therefore, from these words, I will propound and endeavour to satisfy these three queries. 1. What? 2. Why? 3. How?

I. What the duty is, to which they mutually stir up one another?

II. Why, or upon what considerations?

III. How, or in what manner this service is to be performed? And in all these you shall see what proportion the text holds with the times. The duty in our text, with

the duty in our hands, pressing them on still in an exhortatory way.

For the first. What the duty is?

Answ. You see that in the text; it is to join themselves to the Lord, by a solemn covenant; and so is that which we have now in our hands, to join ourselves to the Lord by a covenant; how far they correspond, will appear in the sequel. This is the first and main end of a covenant between God and His people, as I have shewed you, "to join themselves to the Lord. The sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, and take hold of His covenant."

This, I say, is the first and main end of the covenant in the text: the second is subordinate unto it; namely, to inquire the way to Zion, *i.e.*, to inquire the way and manner, how God would be worshipped; that they might dishonour and provoke Him no more, by their idolatries and superstitions, which had been brought in upon the ordinances of God, by the means of apostate kings, and priests, and prophets, as in Jeroboam's and Ahab's reigns, and for which they had been carried into captivity.

And such is the covenant that lies before us: in the first place, as I say, to join ourselves to the Lord, to be knit inseparably unto Him, that He may be our God, and we may be His people. And in the next place, as subservient hereunto, to ask the way to Zion; to inquire and search by all holy means, sanctified to that purpose, what is that pure way of gospel worship; that we and our children after us may worship the God of spirits, the God of truth, in spirit, and in truth. In spirit opposed to carnal ways of will-worship, and inventions of men; and in truth, opposed to false hypocritical shews and pretences, since the Father seeks such to worship Him.

Now, that this is the main scope and aim of this covenant before us, will appear, if you read and ponder it with due

consideration ; I will therefore read it to you distinctly, this evening, besides the reading of it again to-morrow, when you come to take it ; and when I have read it, I will answer the main and most material objections, which seem to make it inconsistent with these blessed ends and purposes. Attend diligently while I read it to you.

(The covenant was then read.)

This brethren, is the covenant before us ; to which God and His parliament do invite us this day ; wherein the ends propounded lie fair to every impartial eye.

The first article in this covenant, binding us to the reformation of religion ; and the last article, to the reformation of our lives. In both, we join ourselves to the Lord, and swear to ask and receive from His lips the law of this reformation. Truly, this is a why, as well as a what, (that I may a little prevent myself) a motive of the first magnitude. Oh ! for a people or person to be joined unto the Lord ; to be made one with the most high God of heaven and earth, before whom and to whom we swear, is a privilege of unspeakable worth and excellency. "Seemeth it (said David once to Saul's servants) a small thing in your eyes, to be son-in-law to a king," seeing I am a poor man ? Seemeth it, may I say, a small thing to you, for poor creatures to be joined, and married, as it were, to the great God, the living God ; who are so much worse than nothing, by how much sin is worse than vanity ? yea, to be one with Him as Christ saith in that heavenly prayer of His ; as He and His Father are one. "That they may be one, as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee ; that they also may be one in us." And again, "that they may be one, even as we are one." Yea, perfect in one ; not indeed, in the perfection of that unity, but in unity of that perfection ; not made perfect in a perfection of equality, but of conformity.

This is the fruit of a right managed covenant ; and the greatest honour that poor mortality is capable of. Moses

stands admiring of it. You may read the place at your leisure. But, against this blessed service and truth, are there mustered and led up an whole regiment of objections, under the conduct of the father of lies; though some of them may seem to have some shadow of truth; and therefore so much the more carefully to be examined. I shall deal only with some of the chief commanders of them, if they be conquered the rest will vanish of their own accord.

Objections Propounded and Answered.

Object. 1. If this were the end of this service, yet it were needless: since we have done it over and over again, in our former protestations and covenants; and so this repetition may seem to be a profanation of so holy an ordinance, by making of it so ordinary, and nothing else, but a taking of God's name in vain. To this I answer.

Answ. 1. It cannot be done too oft; if it be done according to the law and order of so solemn an ordinance. 2. The people in the text might have made the same objection; it lay as strong against the work, to which they encourage one another: for surely, this was not the first time they engaged themselves to God by way of covenant; but having broken their former covenants, they thought it their privilege, and not their burden to renew it again, and to make it more full, stable, and impregnable than ever; "a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten"; which hints 3. And that is, there was never yet so full and strict a covenant tendered to us since we were a people. Former covenants have had their defect and failings, like the best of God's people: but I may say of this in reference to other covenants, as Solomon of his good house-wife, in reference to other women; "Other daughters have done well, but thou hast exceeded them all." Other covenants have done well, but this hath exceeded them all; like Paul among the apostles, it goes beyond them all, though it

seems to be born out of due time. Now, if your leases and covenants among men be either lame or forfeited; need men persuade you to have them renewed and perfected? Of how much greater concernment is this, between God and us, O! ye of little faith? 4. You receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper once a month, and some will not be kept off, tho' they have no part, nor portion in that mystery, say the ministers of Christ what they can; and the sacrament is but the seal of the covenant; consider it, and be convinced.

Object. 2. But secondly, it is objected there be some clauses in this covenant, that serve rather to divide us farther from God, than join us nearer to Him; as binding us to inquire the way to Zion of men rather than of God; to receive the law of reformation from Scotland, and other churches, and not from the lips of the great prophet of the churches.

In the article, we swear first to maintain the religion, as it is already reformed in Scotland, in doctrine, government, and discipline; wherein, first, the most shall swear they know not what; and secondly, we swear to conform ourselves here in England, to their government and discipline in Scotland which is presbyterial, and for ought we know, as much tyrannical, and more antichristian than that of prelacy, which we swear to extirpate; yea, some have not been afraid to call it the Antichrist that is now in the world.

Answ. 1. To whom I first answer, beseeching them in the bowels of compassion, and spirit of meekness, to take heed of such rash and unchristian censures, least God hear, and it displease Him; and they themselves possibly be found to commit the sin and incur the woe of them that "call evil good, and good evil." 2. Whereas they object that many shall swear they know not what, the most being totally ignorant of the discipline of Scotland, and very few understanding it distinctly. I would have these remember and consider two examples in Scripture the one of king Josiah,

the other of the women and children in Nehemiah's time. Josiah (as the text tells us) not being above eight years of age, "While he was yet young, began to seek after the Lord God of David his father; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem." And this purging and reformation he did by covenant, wherein he swore, to "walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments, and His testimonies, and His statutes." Which surely, at that age, we cannot conceive he did distinctly and universally understand; no more could all the men, their wives and their sons, and their daughters, that took the covenant (in Nehemiah's time) understand all things in particular to which that covenant did bind them; since they did enter into a curse, and an oath, not only to refuse all intermarriages with the heathen, but also to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord, and His judgments, and His statutes.

Surely there were in this multitude, not an inconsiderable number that were not acquainted with all the moral precepts, judicial laws, and ceremonial statutes, which God commanded the people by the hand of Moses.

There be two things I know, that may be replied against these instances. 1. That of those women and children in Nehemiah, it is said in the same place, they were of understanding, "Every one having knowledge, and having understanding: they clave unto their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse." 2. That there is a great difference between the laws and statutes to which they swore, and this government and discipline to which we swear in this covenant. Those laws and statutes were ordained immediately of God Himself; and therefore being infallibly right, unquestionably holy, and just, and good. Josiah and the people might lawfully swear observance to them with an implicit faith; but not so in a government and discipline set

up by man, by a church, be it never so pure and holy: for their light being but a borrowed light, and they not privileged with an infallible Spirit (as the apostles) their resolutions and ordinances may be liable to mistake and error; and therefore, to swear observance to them by an implicit faith, is more than comes to their share, and as unwarrantable as it is unsafe for a people or person to do, who are yet ignorant or unsatisfied in the whole, or in any particular.

To these objections I rejoin: *first*, that that description of the covenanters in Nehemiah, that "they were of understanding, and knowledge," supposeth not a distinct actual cognizance of every particular ordinance, judgment, statute, and provision, in all the three laws, moral, judicial, ceremonial, in every one that took the covenant; that being not only needless but impossible; but it implies only a capacity to receive instruction and information in the things they swore unto, tho' at present they were ignorant of many of the severals contained in that oath. And so far this rule obtains among us; children that are not yet come to understanding, and fools, being not admitted to this service, as not capable of instruction.

Answ. 2. To the second (tho' more considerable) yet the answer is not very difficult: for,

First, We do not swear to observe that discipline, but to preserve it: I may preserve that, which in point of conscience I cannot observe, or not, at least, swear to observe. *Second*, We swear to preserve it, not in opposition to any other form of government that may be found agreeable to the Word, but in opposition against a common enemy, which is a clause of so wide a latitude, and easy a digestion, as the tenderest conscience need not kick at it; this preservation relating not so much to the government, as to the persons or nation under this government; not so much to preserve it as to preserve them in it, against a prelatical

party at home, or a popish party abroad, that should attempt by violence to destroy them, or to force another government upon them, that should be against the Word of God; under which latitude, I see not but we might enter into the like covenant with Lutherans, or other reformed churches, whose government, discipline, and worship, is yet exceedingly corrupted with degenerate mixtures.

Third, Neither in the preservation of their government, nor in the reformation of ours, do we swear to any thing of man's; but to what shall be found to be the mind of Christ. Witness that clause, article 1: "According to the word of God:" so that upon the matter, it is no more than Josiah and the people in Nehemiah swore to; namely, "what shall appear to be the statutes and laws which Christ hath left in His Word, concerning the regimen of His church?"

Fourth, Nay, not so much; for we are not yet called to swear the observation of any kind of government, that is or shall be presented to us, but to endeavour the reformation of religion in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the Word of God.

In the faithful and impartial search and pursuit whereof, if Scotland, or any of the reformed churches, can hold us forth any clearer light than our own, we receive it not as our rule, but as such an help to expound our rule, as Christ Himself hath allowed us. In which case, we are bound to kiss not the lips only, but the very feet of them that shall be able to shew us "the way to Zion."

So that still, it is not the voice of the churches but of Christ in the churches, that we covenant to listen to, in this pursuit; that is to say, that we will follow them, as they follow Christ: and when all is done, and a reformation (through the assistance and blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ, that great king and prophet of His church) resolved on according to this rule thus interpreted, under what notion or obligation the observation of it shall be commended

to us, *sub judice lis est*, it is yet in the bosom and breast of authority; we are as yet called to swear to nothing in this kind. So much in reference to the instances.

Answ. 3. I answer further to the satisfying of this second doubt, that by this covenant, we are bound no more to conform to Scotland, than Scotland to us: the stipulation being mutual, and this stipulation binding us not so much to conform one to another, as both of us to the Word; wherein, if we can meet, who would not look upon it, as upon the precious fruit of Christ's prayer: "That they might be one, as we are one?" and the beauty and safety of both nations, and of as many of the churches as the Lord our God shall persuade to come into this holy and blessed association?

Object. 3. A third objection falls upon the second article or branch of this covenant; wherein it is feared by some, that we swear to extirpate that which, for ought we know, upon due inquiry, may be found the way to Zion, the way of evangelical government, which Christ and His apostles have set up in the church.

Answ. Where lies that, think you? In what clause or word of the article? Who can tell? Surely not in popery; or if there be any that think that the way, I would wish their persons in Rome, since their hearts are there already. Is it in superstition? Nay, superstition properly consisteth in will-worship, "teaching for doctrine the traditions of men;" this cannot be the way to Zion, which Christ hath chalked out to us in His word. No more can heresy, which is the opposition to sound doctrine; nor schism, which is the rent of the church's peace; nor profaneness, the poison of her conversation. None but superstitious heretics, schismatics, profane persons, will call these the way to Zion; nor these neither, under the name and notion of superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness; for the heretic will not call his doctrine heresy; nor the superstitious, his innovation superstition; nor the schismatic, his turbulent

practices schism; nor lastly, the profane person, his lewdness profaneness; tho' they love the thing, they hate the name.

And this, before we go further, occasions another objection, which you must give me leave both to make and answer in a parenthesis, and then I will return.

Object. How can we swear the extirpation of these, since, who shall be judge? While some will be ready to call that schism and superstition, which is not; and others deny that to be heresy, superstition, schism, which is?

Answ. 1. To which I answer, By the same argument, we ought not to covenant against popery and drunkenness, sabbath-breaking, nor any other sin whatsoever, there being nothing so gross but it will find some friends to justify, and plead for it; which if we shall not condemn till all parties be agreed on the verdict, we shall never proceed to judgment, while the world stands. 2. The word must be the rule and the judge, say men what they please, *pro* or *con.* 3. And if the matter be indeed so disputable, that it lies not in my faculty to pronounce sentence, I have my dispensation to suspend, till the world determine the controversy.

I now return; if then in none of these, the doubt must of necessity lie in that word prelacy. And is that indeed the way of gospel government? Is that it indeed which bears away the bell of *jure divino?* What is it then that hath destroyed all gospel order, and government and worship, in these kingdoms, as in other places of the Christian world, even down to the ground? Hath it not been prelacy? What is it that hath taken down a teaching ministry, and set up in the room a teaching-ceremony? Is it not prelacy? What is it that hath silenced, suspended, imprisoned, deprived, banished, so many godly, learned, able ministers of the gospel; yea, and killed some of them with their unheard of cruelties, and

thrust into their places idol, idle shepherds; dumb dogs that cannot bark (unless it were at the flock of Christ; so they learned of their masters, both to bark and bite too) greedy dogs that could never have enough, that did tear out the loins and bowels of their own people for gain, heap living upon living, preferment upon preferment; swearing, drunken, unclean priests, that taught nothing but rebellion in Israel, and caused people to abhor the sacrifice of the Lord: Arminian, popish, idolatrous, vile wretches, such as, had Job been alive, he would not have set with the dogs of his flock; who, I say, brought in these? Did not prelacy? What hath hindered the reformation of religion all this while in doctrine, government, and worship? Prelacy, a generation of men they were, that never had a vote for Jesus Christ; yea, what hath poisoned and adulterated religion in all these branches, and hath let in popery and profaneness upon the kingdom like a flood, for the raising of their own pomp and greatness, but prelacy? In a word, prelacy it is, that hath set its impure and imperious feet, one upon the church, the other upon the state, and hath made both serve as Pharaoh did the Israelites, with rigour. Surely, their government hath been a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear.

Now, that which hath done this, and a thousand times more violence and mischief to Christ and His people, than the tongue or pen of man is able to express; can that be the way of or to Zion? Can that be the government of Christ and His Church?

Object. Aye, but there be that will tell us, these have been the faults of the persons, and not of the calling?

Answ. 1. So cry some indeed, that ye like the men, as well as their calling, and would justify the persons as well as the office, but that their wickedness is made so manifest that impudency itself cannot deny it. But is it indeed only the fault of the men, not of the calling? What meant then that

saying of queen Elizabeth, "That when she had made a bishop, she had spoiled a preacher?" Was it only a jest? 2. And I wish we had not too just cause to add, the man too. Surely of the most of them we may say, as once Arnobius spake of the Gentiles, *apud vos optimi censentur quos comparatio pessimorum sic facit.* Give me leave to vary it a little: he was a good bishop, that was not the worst man; but if there were some of a better complexion, who yet, *apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto*, were very rarely discovered in their episcopal see; yet, 3. Look into their families, and they were for the most part the vilest in the diocese, a very nest of unclean birds; and, 4. If you had looked into their courts and consistories, you would have thought you had been in Caiaphas' hall, where no other trade was driven but the crucifying of Christ in His members. 5. But fifthly, produce me one in this last succession of bishops (I hope the last) that had not his hands imbrued more or less in the blood of the faithful ministry, (I say not ministers, but ministry) produce a man amongst them all, that durst be so conscientious as to lay down his bishoprick, rather than he would lay violent hands upon a non-conforming minister, though he had failed but in one point of their compass of ceremonies, when their great master, the pope of Canterbury, commanded it, although both for life, learning, and orthodox religion, their consciences did compel them to confess with Pilate, "we find no fault in this just person." I say, produce me such a bishop amongst the whole bunch, in this latter age, and I will down on my knees, and ask them forgiveness. Oh! it was sure a mischievous poisoned soil, in which, whatsoever plant was set did hardly ever thrive after. 5. But yet further, was not the calling as bad as the men? You may as well say so of the papacy in Rome, for surely the prelacy of England, which we swore to extirpate, was the very same fabric and model of ecclesiastical regimen, that is in that

Antichristian world; yea, such an evil it is that some divines, venerable for their great learning, as well as for their eminent holiness, did conceive sole episcopal jurisdiction to be the very seat of the beast, upon which the fifth angel is now pouring out his vial, which is the reason that the men of that kingdom "gnaw their tongues for pain, and blaspheme the God of heaven."

Object. Aye, but it is therefore pleaded further against this clause, that although it may be prelacy with all its adjuncts and accidents of archbishops, chancellors, and commissaries, deans, &c., may have haply been the cause of these evils that have broken in upon us, and perhaps Antichristian; yet should we therefore swear the extirpation of all prelacy, or episcopacy whatsoever; since there may be found perhaps in scripture an episcopacy or prelacy, which, circumcised from these exuberant members and officers, may be that government Christ hath bequeathed His church in the time of the gospel?

Answ. Now we shall quickly close this business. For, 1. It is this prelacy, thus clothed, thus circumstanced, which we swear to extirpate; read else the clause again, prelacy, that is, church government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors. Not every, or all kinds of prelacy; not prelacy in the latitude of the notion thereof. 2. And secondly, let us join issue upon this point, and make no more words of it; if there be an episcopacy or prelacy found in the Word, as the way of gospel-government, which Christ hath bequeathed the churches, and this be made appear, we are so far from swearing to extirpate such a prelacy, as that rather we are bound by virtue of this oath to entertain it, as the mind and will of Jesus Christ. And this might suffice to warrant our covenanting to extirpate this prelacy, save that only.

Yet some seem conscientiously to scruple this in the last place. *Object.* That they see not what there is to warrant

our swearing, to extirpate that which is established by the law of the land, till the same law have abolished it. To which I answer, 1. If the law of the land had abolished it, we need not swear the extirpation of it. 2. In this oath, the parliaments of both kingdoms go before us, who, having the legislative power in their hands, have also *potestatem vitæ et necis*, over laws, as well as over persons, and may as well put to death the evil laws that do offend against the kingdom and the welfare of it, as the evil persons that do offend against the laws. 3. Who therefore, thirdly, if they may lawfully annul and abolish laws that are found to sin against the law of God, and the good of the kingdom may as lawfully bind themselves by an oath, to use the uttermost of their endeavours to annul and abolish those laws; their oath being nothing else but a solemn engagement to endeavour to perform what they have warrantably resolved upon; and with the same equity may they bind the kingdom to assist them in so doing. 4. Which is all that the people are engaged to by this covenant. Not to outrun the parliament in this extirpation, but to follow and serve them in it, by such concurrence as they may expect from each person in their stations and callings; for that clause, expressed in the first and third article, is to be understood in all.

Object. If it be yet objected, that the members of parliament have, at one time or other, sworn to preserve the laws; and therefore to swear to endeavour the extirpation of prelacy, which is established by law, is to contradict their own oath and run the hazard of perjury: it is easy for any one to observe and answer. 1. That by the same argument, neither may king and parliament together change or annul a law, though found destructive to the good of the kingdoms, since his majesty, as well as his subjects, are bound up under the same oath at his coronation. 2. But again, there is a vast difference between the members of

parliament, simply considered in their private capacities, wherein they may be supposed to take an oath to maintain the laws of the land; and that public capacity of a parliament, whereby they are judges of those laws, and may, as I said before, endeavour the removal of such as are found pernicious to the church or state, and make such as will advantage the welfare of others; his majesty being bound by his coronation-oath, to confirm these laws, which the commons shall agree upon and present unto his majesty.

Object. Aye, but it seems this objection lies full and strong upon them that stand in their single private stations. I answer, that if there be any such oath, which yet I have never seen nor heard of, unless the objection mean that clause in the late parliament protestation, wherein we vow and protest to maintain and defend the lawful rights and liberties of the subject; surely, neither in that nor this, do we swear against a lawful endeavour to get any such laws or clause of the law repealed and abolished, which is found a wrong, rather than a right, and the bondage, rather than the liberty of the subject, as prelacy was. Had we indeed taken the bishop's oath, or the like, never to have given our consent to have the government by episcopacy changed or altered, we had brought ourselves into a woful snare; but, blessed be God, that snare is broken, and we are escaped; while, in the mean time without all doubt, the subject may as lawfully use all lawful means to get that law removed, which yet he hath promised or sworn to obey, while it remains, when it proves prejudicial to the public safety and welfare; as a poor captive, that hath peradventure sworn obedience to the Turk, (while he remains in his possession) may notwithstanding use all fair endeavours for an escape or ransom. Or a prentice that is bound to obey his master; yet, when he finds his service turned into a bondage, may use lawful means to obtain his freedom.

But once more to answer both objections; it is worth

your inquiry, whether the plea of a legal establishment of this prelacy, sworn against in this covenant, be not rather a tradition, than any certain or confessed truth. Sure I am, we have it from the hands of persons of worth and honour; the ablest secretaries of laws and antiquities in our kingdom, that there is no such law or statute to be found upon the file, among our records. Which assertion, if it cannot find faith, we will once more join issue with the patrons or followers of this prelacy, upon this point, that when they produce that law or statute which doth enact and establish prelacy, as it is here branched in the article, we will then give them a fuller answer, or yield the question.

To conclude therefore, since this prelacy in the article, this many headed monster of archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy, is the beast, wherewith we fight in this covenant, which hath been found so destructive to church and state; let us not fear to take this sword of the covenant of God into our hands, and say to this enemy of Christ, as Samuel said once to Agag, (at what time he said within himself, "surely the bitterness of death is past") "As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women." So hath prelacy flattered itself, finding such a party to stand up on its side among the rotten lords and commons, the debauched gentry, and abased people of the kingdom: "Surely the bitterness of death is past." "I sit as a queen, and shall not know widowhood, or loss of children." In the midst of this security and pride, the infallible forerunners of her downfall, let us call her forth, and say, as thy sword, prelacy, hath made many women childless, many a faithful minister peopleless, houseless and libertyless, their wives husbandless, their children and their congregations fatherless, and pastorless, and guideless; so thy mother, papacy, shall be made

childless among harlots, your diocese bishopless, and your sees lordless, and your places shall know you no more. Come, my brethren, I say, and fear not to take this Agag, (prelacy, I mean, not the prelates) and hew it in pieces before the Lord.

Object: 4. A fourth and main objection that troubles many, is, that in the following article there are divers things of another nature that should fall within the compass of such a covenant, as that which the text holds forth, "to join ourselves to the Lord." There be state-matters, and such too, as are full of doubt, and perhaps of danger, to be sworn unto. I shall answer, first, the general charge, and then some of the particulars which are most material. In general, I answer, there is nothing in the body of this covenant which is not either purely religious, or which lies not in a tendency to religion, conducing to the securing and promoting thereof. And as, in the expounding the commandments, divines take this rule, that that command which forbids a sin, forbids also all the conducibles and provocations to that sin, all the tendencies to it: and that command which enjoins a duty, enjoins all the mediums and advancers to that duty; circumstances fall within the latitude of the command: so in religious covenants, not only those things which are of the substance and integrals of religion, but even the collaterals and subserviences that tend either to the establishing or advancing of religion, may justly be admitted within the verge and pale of the covenant. The cities of refuge had their suburbs appointed by God, as well as their habitations, and even they also were counted holy. The rights and privileges of the parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdom, mentioned in the third article; they are the suburbs of the gospel, and an inheritance bequeathed by God to nations and kingdoms, and, under that notion, holy. Concerning which a people may lawfully reply to the unjust demands of emperors, kings, or states,

as Naboth once to Ahab, when demanded to yield up his vineyard to his majesty: "God forbid, that I should give the inheritance of my father." These be the outworks of religion, the lines of communication, as I may so say, for the defence of this city; which the prelates well knew, and therefore you see, it was their great design first, by policy to have surprised, and, when that would not do, then, by main strength of battle, to storm these out-works: well knowing, that if they once had won these, they should quickly be masters also of the holy city, religion itself, and do what they listed. And, therefore, the securing of these must of necessity be taken into the same councils and covenant with religion itself.

This premised in general, we shall easily and apace satisfy the particular scruples and queries as I go.

1. *Scruple.* The most part that swear this covenant are in a great degree, if not totally, ignorant what the rights and privileges of the parliament, and the liberties of the kingdoms are, and how can they then swear to maintain they know not what?

1. By the same argument no man, or very few, might lawfully swear to maintain the king's prerogatives in the paths of allegiance and supremacy; nor the king himself swear to maintain the liberties of the subject, as he doth in his oath at his coronation. 2. But there is hardly any person so ignorant but knows there are privileges belonging to the parliaments, and liberties belonging to the subject. 3. And that it is the duty of every subject, according to his place and power, to maintain these; so that, in taking of this covenant, we swear to do no more than our duty binds us to; in which there is no danger, tho' we do not in every point know how far that duty extends in every branch and several thereof. 4. In swearing to do my duty, whether to God or man, if I be ignorant of many particulars, I oblige myself to these two things. 1. To use the best means to

inform myself of the particulars. 2. To conform myself to what I am informed to be my duty. Which yet, in the case in hand, doth admit of a further latitude, namely, that which lies in the very word and letter of this article (as in most of the rest) in our several vocations; which doth not bind every one to the same degree of knowledge, nor the same way of preservation: as for example, I do not conceive every magistrate is bound to know so much, no, nor to endeavour to know so much, as parliament-men: nor every member of parliament so much as judges; nor ministers so much as the lawyers; nor ordinary people so much as ministers; nor servants so much as masters; nor all to preserve them the same way; parliament-men by demanding them, lawyers by pleading, judges by giving the sense and mind of the law, ministers by preaching, magistrates by defending, people by assisting, praying, yielding obedience. All, if the exigencies arise so high, and the state call for it, by engaging their estates and lives, in case they be invaded by an unlawful power. And in case of ignorance, the thing we bind ourselves to is this, that if at any time any particular shall be in question, what the parliament shall make appear to be their right or the liberty of the subject, we promise to contribute such assistance for the preservation or reparation thereof, as the nature of the thing, and wisdom of the state shall call for at our hands, in our several places.

2. *Scruple.* But some are offended, while they conceive in the same article, that the clause wherein we swear the preservation and defence of the king's person and authority, doth lie under some restraint, by that limitation; in the preservation and defence of the true religion, and the liberties of the kingdom. To which we reply. 1. It maintains him as far as he is a king: he may be a man, but sure no king, without the lists and verge of religion and laws, it being religion and laws that make him a king. 2.

It maintains his person and estate, as far as his majesty himself doth desire and expect to be defended; for, sure his justice cannot desire to be defended against, but in the preservation of religion and laws; and his wisdom cannot expect it, since he cannot believe that they will make conscience of defending his person, who make no conscience of preserving religion and the laws; I mean, when the ruin of his person and authority may advance their own cursed designs. They that, for their ends, will defend his person and authority against religion and liberties of the kingdom, will with the same conscience defend their own ends against his person and authority, when they have power in their hands. The Lord deliver his majesty from such defenders, by what names or titles soever they be called. 3. Who doubts but that religion and laws, (wherein the rights and liberties of kingdoms are bound up) are the best security of the persons and authority of kings and governors? And the while kings will defend these, these will defend kings? It being impossible that princes should suffer violence or indignity, while they are within the munition of religion and laws; or if the prince suffer, these must of necessity suffer with him. 4. I make a question, whether this limitation lie any more upon the defence of the king's person and authority, than it doth upon the rights and privileges of parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdom, since there is no point or stop in the article to appropriate it more to the defence of the king's person and authority, than to the preservation of the rights and privileges of the parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdoms? 5. And lastly, this clause is not to be understood exclusive, as excluding all other cases wherein the kingdoms stand bound to preserve his majesty's person and authority, but only as expressing that case wherein the safety of his person and authority doth most highly concern both king and kingdoms, especially at such a time as this is, when both are

so furiously and implacably encountered by a malignant army of desperate parricides, papists, and their prelatical party.

These objections answered, and difficulties removed, we proceed to the examining of the rest of the particulars, in the following articles.

The discovery of incendiaries or malignants that have been, or shall be, to which the fourth article binds us: doth it not lie also in a necessary tendency to the securing and preserving of this covenant inviolable with the most high God, in point of reformation? For can we hope a thorough reformation, according to the mind of Christ, if opposers of reformation may escape scot-free, undiscovered and unpunished? Or, can we indeed love or promote a reformation, and in the mean time countenance or conceal the enemies of it? This is clear, yet it wants not a scruple, and that peradventure which may trouble a sincere heart.

Object. It is this, having once taken this oath, if we hear a friend, or brother, yea, perhaps a father, a husband, or a wife, let fall a word of dislike of the parliament, or assembly's proceedings in either kingdom; or that discovers another judgment, or opinion; or a word of passion unadvisedly uttered, and do not presently discover and complain of it, we pull upon ourselves the guilt or danger of perjury, which will be a mighty snare to thousands of well affected people.

To which I answer. 1. The objection lays the case much more narrow than the words of the article, which distinguisheth the incendiary or malignant, which is to be discovered by a three-fold character, or note of malignity. *First*, Hindering the reformation of religion. *Secondly*, Dividing the king from his people, or one kingdom from another. *Thirdly*, Making any faction or parties amongst the people, contrary to the league and covenant. Now,

every dislike of some passage in parliament or assembly's proceedings; every dissent in judgment and opinion; every rash word or censure, that may possibly be let fall through passion and inadvertency, will not amount to so high a degree of malignity as is here expressed, nor consequently bring one within the compass of this oath and covenant. A suitable and seasonable caution or conviction may suffice in such a case.

2. But, suppose the malignity to arise to that height here expressed in any of the branches thereof; I do not conceive the first work this oath of God binds us to, is to make a judicial discovery thereof; while, without controversy, our Saviour's rule of dealing with our brethren in cases of offence is not here excluded; which is, 1. To see what personal admonition will do; which, toward a superior, as husband, parent, master, or the like, must be managed with all wisdom and reverence. If they hear us, we have made a good day's work of it; we have gained our brother; if not, then the rule directs us yet. 2. In the second place, to take with us two or three more: if they do the deed, thou mayest sit down with peace and thankfulness. 3. If, after all this, the party shall persist in destructive practices to hinder reformation, to divide the king from his people, or one kingdom from another; or lastly, to make factions or parties among the people; be it the man of thine house, the husband of thy youth, the wife of thy bosom, the son of thy loins: "Levi must know neither father nor mother," private relations must give way to public safety; thou must with all faithfulness endeavour the discovery, thine "eye must not pity nor spare." It is a case long since stated by God Himself; and when complaint is made to any person in authority, the plaintiff is discharged, and the matter rests upon the hands of authority. Provided, notwithstanding, that there be, in the use of all the former means, that latitude allowed which the apostle gives in case of heresy; "A first and second

admonition." This course, not only the rule of our Saviour in general, but the very words of the covenant itself, doth allow, for, though the clause be placed in the sixth article, yet it hath reference to all, viz., "What we are not able ourselves to suppress or overcome, we shall reveal and make known." So that, if the malignity fall within our own or our friends' ability to conquer, we have discharged our duty to God and the kingdoms, and may sit down with comfort in our bosoms.

That which remains in the other two articles, I cannot see how it affords any occasion of an objection; and the reference it hath to the reformation and preservation of religion, is easy and clear to any eye, that is not wilfully blind; the preservation of peace between the two kingdoms, in the fifth article, being the pillar of religion; for how can religion and reformation stand, if any blind malignant Samson be suffered to pull down the pillars of peace and union? Besides, it was a branch of that very covenant in the text, as well as of that in our hands. The children of Israel and Judah, which had a long time been disunited, and in that disunion had many bloody and mortal skirmishes and battles, now at length by the good hand of God upon them, take counsel to join themselves, first one to another, and then both unto God. Let us "join ourselves," and then to "the Lord, in a perpetual covenant." Surely, not only this copy in the text, but the wormwood and the gall of our civil combustions and wars, which our souls may have in remembrance to our dying day, and be humbled within us, may powerfully persuade us to a cheerful engagement of ourselves, for the preservation of a firm peace and union between the kingdoms, to all posterity.

And lastly, as peace is the pillar of religion, so mutual assistance and defence of all those that enter into this league and covenant, in the maintaining and pursuance thereof, (mentioned in that sixth and last article) is the pillar of that

peace, *divide et impera;* desert one another, and we expose ourselves to the lusts of our enemies. And who can object against the securing of ourselves, and the state, against a detestable indifferency or neutrality, but they must, *ipso facto*, proclaim to all the world that they intend before-hand to turn neutrals or apostates?

To conclude, therefore, having thus examined the several articles of the covenant, and the material clauses in those articles; and finding them to be, if not of the same nature, yet of the same design with the preface and conclusion; the one whereof, as I told you, at the entrance, obligeth us to the reformation of religion; the other, of our lives, as serving to the immediate and necessary support and perfecting of these blessed and glorious ends and purposes: I shall need to apologise no further in the vindicating and asserting of this covenant before us. Could we be so happy, as to bring hearts suitable to this service: could we set up such aims and ends as the covenant holds forth; the glory of God, the good of the kingdoms, and honour of the king, to which, this covenant, and every several part thereof, doth humbly prostrate itself, all would conspire to make us and our posterity after us, an happy and glorious people to all generations.

To them that object out of conscience, these poor resolutions may afford some relief, if not satisfaction: or, if these slender endeavours fall short of my design, and the reader's desires herein, I shall send them to their labours, who have taken more able and fruitful pains in this subject. To them that object out of a spirit of bitterness and malignity, nothing will suffice. He that is resolved to err, is satisfied with nothing but that which strengthens his error. And these I leave to such arguments and convictions, which the wisdom and justice of authority shall judge more proper; while I proceed to the second query propounded, for the managing of this use of exhortation; Why? Or, upon what

considerations we may be persuaded to undertake this service? To enter into this holy covenant.

And the first motive that may engage us hereunto is the consideration, how exceedingly God hath been dishonoured among us, by all sorts of covenant-violation, as hath been formerly discovered at large; in the avenging whereof, the angel of the covenant stands, as once at the door of paradise, with a flaming sword in his hand, ready to cut us off, and cast us out of this garden of God—this good land wherein He hath planted us thus long. I may say unto you therefore, concerning ourselves, as once Moses in another case, concerning Miriam; "If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed?" If our father had but spit in our face by some inferior correction, should we not be ashamed? Ought we not to be greatly humbled before Him? How much more, when "He hath poured out upon us the fury of His wrath, and it hath burned us; and the strength of battle, and it hath set on fire round about?" Should we not lay it to heart, and use all means to pacify the fierceness of His anger, lest it burn down to the very foundations of the land, and none be able to quench it?

Yea, secondly, a wonderful mercy, and an high favour we may count it from God, that yet such a sovereign means is left us for our recovery and reconciliation. Infinite condescension and goodness it is in our God that, after so many fearful provocations by our unhallowed and treacherous dealing in the covenant, He will vouchsafe yet to have any thing to do with us, that He will yet trust or try us any more, by admitting us to renew our covenant with His Majesty, when He might in justice rather say unto us, as to the wicked, "What have you to do, that you should take My covenant into your mouths, seeing you hate instruction, and cast My words behind you?" Certainly, had man broken with us, as oft as we have broken with God, we should never trust them any more, but account them as the off-scouring

of mankind, the vilest, the basest that ever trode upon God's ground; and yet that after so many unworthy and treacherous departures from our God, after so much unfaithfulness and perfidiousness in the covenant, (such as it is not in the capacity of one man to be guilty of towards another) that God should say to us, as once to His own people, "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return to Me, saith the Lord:" Oh, wonder of free grace! Oh, might this privilege be offered to the apostate angels, which kept not the covenant of their creation, nor consequently their first estate, and to the rest of the damned souls in hell! Would God send an angel from heaven to preach unto them a second covenant, upon the laying hold whereon, and closing wherewith, they might be received into grace and favour; how would those poor damned spirits bestir themselves! what rattling of their red-hot chains! what shaking of their fiery locks! In a word, what an uproar of joy would there be in hell, upon such glad tidings! how many glorious churches, as Capernaum, Bethsaida, the seven churches of Asia, with others in latter times, who have for their covenant-violation been cast down from the top of heaven, where once they sat in the beauty and glory of the ordinances, to the very bottom of hell, a dark and doleful condition; and God hath never spoken such a word of comfort, nor made any such offer of recovery, and reconciliation unto them, as He hath done to us unto this day? "Surely He hath not dealt so with any people." Let it be our wisdom, and our thankfulness, to accept of it, with both hands; yea, both with hands and hearts. If God give us hearts suitable to this price that is in our hands, covenanting hearts, as He gives us yet leave and opportunity to renew our covenant, it will be to me a blessed security that we are not yet a lost people; and a new argument of hope, that He intends to do England good. If neglected and despised, whether this

may not be the last time that ever England shall hear from God, I much doubt, unless it be in such a voice as that is, "I would have healed England, and she will not be healed; because I would have purged thee, and thou art not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused My fury to rest upon thee." The Lord forbid such a thing: "for, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Thirdly, We may be mightily encouraged to this service, in as much as it is prophesied of, as the great duty and privilege of gospel-times. You see the evangelical day, is one of those days wherein this prophecy and promise must be fulfilled. And it is the same privilege and happiness which was prophesied of, under the type of the sticks made one, in the hand of the prophet Ezekiel, (Ezek. xxxvii. 16. 22.) For, though in the literal sense, it be to be understood, as it is expressed, of the happy re-union of that unhappy divided seed of Jacob, Joseph and Ephraim, Israel and Judah; yet in a gospel sense, it is to be applied to the churches of Jesus Christ, in the latter days, which tho' formerly divided and miserably torn by unnatural quarrels, and wars, yet Christ, the King of the Church, hath a day wherein He will make them one in His own hand: the great and gracious design which we humbly conceive Christ hath now upon these two nations, England and Scotland, even after all their sad divisions and civil discords, to make them one in His right hand, to all generations. And this gives me assurance, that the work shall go on and prosper, yea, prosper gloriously, it having a stronger foundation to support it than heaven and earth, for they are upheld but by a word of power. But this work, which is called the new heavens and the new earth, is upheld by a word of promise; for "we, according to His promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness." I say, by a word of prophecy and

promise, which, it seems, is stronger than God Himself; for His word binds Him, so that He can as soon deny Himself, as deny His promise. There shall be therefore an undoubted accomplishment of these things, which are told us from the Lord. God will find, or make a people, who shall worship Him in this holy ordinance; and upon whom He will make good all the mercy and truth; all the peace and salvation which is bound up in it: only therefore let me caution and beseech you, not to be wanting to yourselves and your own happiness: "Judge not yourselves unworthy of such a privilege," nor "reject the counsel of God against your own souls; sin not against your own mercies," by withdrawing yourselves from this service, or rebelling against it. "God will exclude none, that do not exclude themselves." Yea, further, this seems to speak an argument of hope, that the calling of the Jews, and the fulness of the Gentiles, is not far behind; inasmuch as God begins now to pour out His promise in the text upon the churches, in a more eminent manner than ever we, or our fathers, saw it in a gospel sense: and, surely, gospel performance must make way for that full and universal accomplishment thereof, which shall unite "Israel and Judah, Jew and Gentile, in one perpetual covenant unto the Lord, that shall never be forgotten." The gospel day is nothing else but the dawning of that great universal day in the text, wherein God will make one glorious Church of Jew and Gentile; the day star whereof is now risen in our horizon: so that I am humbly confident that the same shores shall not bound this covenant, which bound the two now covenanting nations; but, as it is said of the gospel, so it will be verified of this gospel covenant: "The sound thereof will go into all the earth, and the words of it to the ends of the world." There is a spirit of prophecy that doth animate this covenant, which will make it swift and active; swift to run: "His word runs very swiftly." And active, to work deliverance

and safety not only to these two kingdoms, but to all other Christian churches groaning under, or in danger of, the yoke of Antichristian tyranny, whom God shall persuade to join in the same, or like association and covenant. So that, me-thinks, all that travail with the Psalmist's desire "of seeing the good of God's chosen, and rejoicing in the gladness of His nation, and glorying with His inheritance," will certainly rejoice in this day, and in the goodness of God which hath crowned it with the accomplishment of such a precious promise as here lies before us: while none can withdraw from, much less oppose, this service, but such as bear evil will to Zion, and would be unwilling to see the ruin and downfall of Antichrist, which this blessed covenant doth so evidently threaten.

Fourthly, This hath been the practice of all the churches of God, before and since Christ; after their apostasies, and captivities for those apostasies, and recoveries out of these captivities, the first thing they did was to cement themselves to God, by a more close, entire, and solemn covenant than ever. Nehemiah, Ezra, Hezekiah, Jeremiah, Josiah, will all bring in clear evidences to witness this practice. This, latter churches have learned of them, Germany, France, Scotland. But what shall I need to mention the churches, whenas the God of the churches took this course Himself; who, when He pleases to become the God of any people or person, it is by covenant; as with Abraham, "Behold, I make a covenant with thee." And whatever mercies He bestows upon them, it is by covenant. All the blessings of God's people are covenant blessings: to wicked men, God gives with His left hand, out of the basket of common providence; but to His saints, He dispenseth with His right hand, out of the ark of the covenant. "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

Yea, which is yet more to our purpose, when the first

covenant proved not, but miscarried, not by any fault that was in the Covenant-Maker, no, nor simply in the covenant itself; for, if man could have kept it, it would have given him life; I say, when it was broken, God makes a new covenant with His people. "Not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, which My covenant they brake. . . . But this shall be the covenant, . . . I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be My people." Because they could not keep the first covenant, God made a second that should keep them. Oh! that while we are making a covenant with our God, He would please to make such a covenant with us; so would it be indeed a "perpetual covenant, that should not be forgotten." Well, you see we have a covenanting God, a covenant-making God, and a covenant-renewing God; be we "followers of God, as dear children:" let us be a covenanting people, a covenant making, a covenant-renewing people; and as our God, finding fault with the first, let us make a "new covenant, even a perpetual covenant, that shall never be forgotten."

A *fifth* motive to quicken us to this duty, may be even the practice of the Antichristian state and kingdom: popery hath been dexterous to propagate and spread itself by this means. What else have been all their fraternities and brotherhoods, and societies, but so many associations and combinations politic, compacted and obliged, by oaths and covenants, for the advancing of the Catholic cause, whereby nations and kingdoms have been subdued to the obedience of the Roman mitre? And prelacy (that whelp) hath learned this policy of its mother papacy (that lioness) to corroborate and raise itself to that height, we have seen and suffered by these artifices; while, by close combinations among themselves, and swearing to their obedience, all the inferior priesthood, and church-officers, by ordination-engagements and oaths of canonical obedience, a few have been able to impose their

own laws and canons, upon a whole kingdom; yea, upon three kingdoms, it being an inconsiderable company, either of ministers or people (the Lord be merciful to us in this thing) that have had eyes to discover the mystery of iniquity, which these men have driven; and much more inconsiderable, that have had hearts to oppose and withstand their tyranny and usurpations. And why may not God make use of the same stratagem to ruin their kingdom, which they used to build it? Yea, God hath seemed to do it already, while in that place where they cast that roaring canon, and formed their cursed oath, for the establishing their Babel prelacy, with its endless perpetuity. In the very same place hath this covenant been debated and voted, once, and a second time, by command of public authority, for the extirpation of it root and branch, and the casting of it out for ever, as a plant which "our heavenly Father hath not planted." And who knows, but this may be the arrow of the Lord's deliverance, which, as it hath pierced to the very heart of prelacy, so it may also give a mortal wound to the papacy itself, of which it will never be healed by the whole college of physicians (the Jesuits), who study the complexion and health of that Babylonian harlot.

In the sixth and last place, the good success this course hath found in the churches, may encourage us with much cheerfulness and confidence to undertake this service. It hath upon it a *probatum est*, from all that ever conscientiously and religiously used this remedy. It recovered the state and church of the Jews, again and again, many a time, when it was ready to give up the ghost; it recovered and kept a good correspondency between God and them, all the time it was of any esteem and credit amongst them. It brings letters of testimonial with it, from all the reformed churches; especially from our neighbour nation and church of Scotland, where it hath done wonders in recovering that people, when all the physicians in Christendom had given

them over. It is very remarkable. God promiseth to bring them "into the bond of the covenant;" and in the next verse it follows, "and I will purge out the rebels from among you." There is an [and] that couples this duty, and this mercy together; "I will bring you into the bond," "And I will purge out." The walls of Jericho have fallen flat before it. The dagon of the bishop's service-book broke its neck before this ark of the covenant. Prelacy and prerogative have bowed down, and given up the ghost at its feet. What a reformation hath followed at the heels of this glorious ordinance! and truly, even among us, as poorly and lamely, and brokenly, as it hath been managed among us. I am confident, we had given up the ghost before this time, had it not been for this water of life. Oh! what glorious success might we expect, if we did make such cheerful, such holy, such conscientious addresses, as become the law of so solemn an ordinance! truly, could I see such a willing people in this day of God's power, as are here in the text, encouraging and engaging one another, in an holy conspiracy: "Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant;" I have faith enough to promise and prophesy to you in the name of the Lord, and in the words of His servant Haggai, "From this very day I will bless you." And that you may know of what sovereignty this ordinance is; take notice of this, that this is the last physic that ever the church shall take or need; it lies clear in the text: for it is an everlasting covenant; and therefore the last that ever shall be made. After the full and final accomplishment of this promise and duty, the church shall be of so excellent a complexion, that "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein, shall be forgiven their iniquity." The Lord make it such physic to us for Christ's sake.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

SERMON AT LONDON.

By THOMAS CASE.

I COME now to the third query, how? And this inquiry divides itself into two branches—How to (I.) Acceptation and (II.) Perpetuity? For the satisfying of both which, I will fetch as much as may be out of the text, that so you may yet further behold what proportion there is between the duty there, and that which lies before us this day.

In the first place, we must inquire how this duty may be so managed, that God may accept of us in the doing of it? How to acceptation?

Now, in the general, we must know that this service, being an ordinance of God, must be undertaken and managed with an ordinance frame of heart, *i. e.* according to the laws and rules of divine worship; and by how much the more sacred and solemn this ordinance is, by so much the more ought we to call up and provoke the choicest, and heavenliest of those affections and dispositions of spirit, wherewith we make our addressments to the holy things of God.

In particular, *First*, We are to come to this service, with the most ponderous advisedness, and most serious deliberation of judgment, that may be. It is one of those grand qualifications which God Himself calls for to an oath. "Thou shalt swear in truth, in judgment, and in righteous-

ness." In truth for the matter, and that we have already examined in the former sermon in righteousness, in reference to the keeping of the oath (of which hereafter) and in judgment, in respect of the taking or making of the oath, the thing which we are now about, that we should well consider what we do. And indeed, if at any time, and in any undertaking, that advice be useful, "Ponder the path of thy feet," "And keep thy foot when thou enterest into the house of God;" then certainly it is most seasonable, when a people or person draw near to make or renew their covenant with the most high God. And it seems, in the latter of those two Scriptures now quoted, the Holy Ghost doth principally refer to this duty of making vows and covenants with God; the second verse doth intimate such a business, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God." To utter what? The fourth verse is express, "when thou makest a vow unto God." So that it is clear, the purpose of the Holy Ghost in that place is, as in all our holy services, so especially in this of vows, to caution all the people of God, when they draw near to utter their vows unto the Lord, to manage it with the greatest deliberation, and solidness of judgment that is possible; to sit down and consider with ourselves before hand, with whom we have to deal? What we have to do? Upon what warrant? By what rule? To what end? "The lame and the blind," God's soul hates for a sacrifice, The lame affections, and the blind ignorant judgment. And well He may; for certainly, they that do not swear in judgment, will not, cannot swear in righteousness; they that do not make their vows in judgment, will not, cannot pay, or perform them in righteousness. He that swears he knows not what, will observe he cares not how. Incogitant making, will end in unconscionable breaking of covenant; and, if need be, in a cursed abjuration of it; for rash

swearing is a precipice to forswearing. And therefore, if any of you have not well weighed this service, or be any ways unsatisfied, in whole, or in parts, I advise you to forbear, till your judgments be better informed. "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." Provided, that this be not done merely in a pretence to evade and elude this service, to which God and the two nations call you, as here in the text. "Come, let us join." Take heed of casting a mist of willing prejudice and affected ignorance, before your own eyes; such the apostle speaks of, to no other purpose, but that your own malignity may steal away in that mist undiscovered; for be sure, your sin will find you out. An ingenious ignorance and truly conscientious tenderness, is accompanied with an ingenuous and conscientious use of all means, for information and satisfaction; and to such, I make no question, the ministers of Christ will be ready to communicate what light they have, for resolving doubts, removing scruples, and satisfying conscience, whensoever you shall make your addresses for that purpose. In the mean time, if there be any that, under pretence of unsatisfiedness, do shun the duty and information too; they will be found, but to mock God and authority; to whose justice and wisdom therefore I must leave them. God tells His people, when He joins Himself to them, "I will marry thee to Myself, in righteousness, and judgment." How in judgment? Because God considers what He does, when He takes a people or person to Himself; not that God chuseth for any wealth or worth in the creature, faith foreseen, or works foreseen; but that finding it (on the contrary) poor and beggarly, and undone, and foreseeing what it is like to prove, crooked and froward, unteachable and untractable; He sits down to speak after the manner of men, and considers, what course to take, and what it is like to cost Him, to make them such a people, as He may delight in, and then consulting with His treasures, and

finding He hath wherewithal to bear their charges, and to bring about His own ends; He resolves to take them, and marry them to Himself, whatsoever it cost Him. The result of such a consultation you may read, dropped from God's own pen, "And I said, how shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations?" Here is God's wise deliberation on the matter: "how shall I put thee?" That is, how shall I do this? But I must do it to Mine own dishonour; for I see before-hand what thou wilt prove: thou wilt be the same that ever thou wast; as idolatrous, as adulterous, as unstable, as backsliding as ever. It is not a pleasant land, a goodly heritage, that will make thee better. Well, after some pause, God was resolved what to do: and I said, hear His resolution, "Thou shalt call Me, my Father, and shalt not turn away from Me:" that is, as if He had said, I will take this course with thee, I will first give thee the heart of a child, "thou shalt call Me, Father:" and then I will give thee the inheritance of a child, "a goodly heritage." And when I have done; I will not leave thee to thyself, but I will knit thee to Myself, by an indissoluble union. "I will put My Spirit into thee." "And thou shalt not turn away from Me." There is God's wise resolution; He resolves to do all Himself, and then He is sure it will not fail His expectation; He undertakes it. "Thou shalt call Me, my Father, and shalt not turn away from Me." Thus God, when He marrieth His people to Himself, doeth it in judgment. Now therefore, "be ye followers of God, as dear children." And since you come now about the counter-part of the same work; namely, to join or marry yourselves to God, do it in judgment. Consider well what you do; and, among other things, since you are so poor, and nothing in yourselves, as you have seen in the opening of this precious Scripture; bethink yourselves where you will have strength and sufficiency, to make good

this great and solemn engagement with your God. But of this more hereafter.

Secondly, See that you come to this service with a reverential frame of spirit, with that holy fear and awe, upon your hearts, as becomes the greatness and holiness of that God, and that ordinance, with whom you have to do; remembering that you are this day to swear before God, by God, to God: either of which, singly considered, might justly make us fear and tremble; how much more may this threefold cord bow and bind our hearts down in an humble, and holy prosternation? It is said of Jacob, "He sware by the fear of his father Isaac." Jacob in his oath chooseth this title of fear, to give unto God, to shew with what fear he came; but to swear by this God, what should we do; when, as I say, we come to swear by Him, and to Him? Surely, when He is so especially the object of our oath, He should then especially be the object of our fear. The consideration of that infinite distance between God and us, may wonderfully advantage us towards the getting of our hearts into this holy posture. Great is that distance that is between a king and a beggar; and yet, there is but creature and creature; greater is that distance between heaven and earth; and yet these, but creature and creature; and yet, greater is the distance between an angel and a worm; and yet still, there is but creature and creature. But now, the distance that is between God and us, is infinitely wider; for behold, there is the "Mighty, Almighty Creator, before whom all the nations are but as a drop of a bucket, and the small dust of the balance." And the poor nothing creature, "vanity, and altogether lighter than vanity." And yet, this is not all; yea, this is the shortest measure of that distance, whereof we speak; the distance of Creator and the creature; lo, it is found between God and the angels in heaven, and the "spirits of just men made perfect;" in respect whereof,

the Psalmist saith of God, "He humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven." It is a condescension for that infinitely glorious being, who dwells in Himself, and is abundantly satisfied in the beholding of His own incomprehensible excellencies, to vouchsafe to look out of Himself, and behold the things that are in heaven; the best of those glorious inhabitants that stand round about His throne; who therefore, conscious of that infinite distance wherein they stand, make their addresses with the greatest self-abasements, "covering their faces, and casting themselves down" upon those heavenly pavements. But, behold! upon us, poor wretches, that dwell here below, in these houses of clay, there is found that which widens this distance beyond all expression or apprehension: sin sets us farther beneath a worm, than a worm is beneath an angel. I had almost said (bear with the expression, I use it, because no other expression can reach it) sin sets us as much beneath our creatureship, as our creatureship sets us beneath the Creator. Surely there is more of God to be seen in the worst of a creature, than there is of a creature to be seen in the best of sin: there is nothing vile and base enough under heaven, to make a simile of sin.

And now, therefore, if it be such a condescension for the great God to behold the things that are in heaven, how infinite condescension is it, to behold the sinful things that are on earth! and if sinless saints, and spotless angels do tender their services, which yet are as spotless as their persons, with such reverential deportment; what abhorrency and self-annihilation can be sufficient to accompany our approaches to this God of holiness, in such high and holy engagements, in whom, when God looks out of Himself, He can behold nothing besides our creatureship, of our own, but that which His soul hates! "Let us therefore have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably," in this so excellent an ordinance, "with reverence and godly fear; for our

God is a consuming fire." The acceptable serving of God, is with reverence and godly fear. The Lord teach us to bring fear, that so we may find acceptation.

Again, *Thirdly*, to that end, labour to approve yourselves to God in this service, in the uprightness and sincerity of your hearts. The want of this, God lays oft to the charge of the Israelites, as in other duties, so especially in this, which is now before us, "They lied to Him with their tongues: for their heart was not right with Him; neither were they stedfast in His covenant." And this stood between them and their acceptance: God tells the prophet Ezekiel as much; "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face; should I be inquired of at all by them?" They come with their hearts full of their lusts; so many lusts, so many idols; and for this God refuseth to be inquired of by them: "should I be inquired of?" is as much as, "I will not be inquired of." It is a denial with disdain; "should I?" Or, if they be so impudent to inquire, He will not answer; or if He give them an answer, it shall be a cold one; He will give them their answer at the door; better none; "I will answer them according to the multitude of their idols," *i.e.* according to the merit of their idolatry: they bring the matter of their own damnation with them, and they shall carry away nothing else from Me, but the answer or obsignation of that damnation. Oh! it is a dangerous thing, to bring the love of any sin with us to the ordinances of God, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer." And so may we say to our own souls; if I regard iniquity, the Lord will not accept my person, He will not regard my covenant. If God see anything lie nearer our hearts than Himself, He will scorn us, and our services. If, therefore, you would be accepted, "out with your idols;" cast out the love of sin, out of your hearts; and be upright with your God in this

holy undertaking. It is the main qualification in the text, "they shall inquire the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward," *i.e.*, in sincerity, with uprightness of spirit, with the full set and bent of their souls: as it is said of Christ, when He went to His passion; "He stedfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem" He went with all His heart to be crucified; with a strong bent of spirit. Beloved, we are not going to "crucifying work," (unless it be to crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts) but to marriage work; "to join ourselves to the Lord, in an everlasting covenant." Let us do it "with our faces Zionward;" yea, let us stedfastly set our faces reformation-ward and heaven-ward, and God-ward, and Christ-ward, with whom we enter covenant this day. A man may inquire the way to Zion, with his face towards Babylon; a people or person may enter covenant with God, with their hearts Rome-ward, and earth-ward, and sin-ward, and hell-ward. Friends, look to your hearts. "Peradventure, said Jacob, my father will feel me, and I shall seem to him as one that mocks, and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing." Without all peradventure, may we say, our Father will feel us; for He searcheth all hearts, and understandeth the imagination of the thoughts. If we be found as they that mock, shewing much love with our mouths, while our hearts are far from Him, we shall bring a curse upon ourselves; yea, and upon the kingdoms also, and not a blessing. It is reported to the honour of Judah, in the day of their covenanting with their God; "they had sworn with all their heart, and with their whole desire." And their success was answerable to their sincerity; for so it follows, "And the Lord was found of them, and gave them rest round about." Oh! that this might be our honour and happiness in this day, of our lifting up our hands to the most high God, that God might not see in us a double heart, an heart and an heart, as the Hebrew expresses it, *i.e.*

one heart for God, and another for our idols; one heart for Christ, and another for Antichrist, : but He might see us a single, upright hearted people, without base mixtures and composition; for He loves truth, *i.e.* sincerity, in the inward parts; that He finding such sincerity as He looks for, we also might find such success as we look for; safety and deliverance to both the nations; yea, that both in respect of our sincerity and success, that might be made good upon us that is spoken to the eternal honour of that good king Hezekiah, "And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered." Universal sincerity is accompanied with universal prosperity; in all he did, he was upright, and in all he did, he prospered. Brethren, whatever you want, be sure you want not sincerity; let God see you fully set in your hearts to take all from sin, and to give all to Jesus Christ; me-thinks I hear God saying unto us, "according to your uprightness, so be it unto you."

In the *Fourth* place, if you would be accepted by God in this holy service, labour to make God your end. It is your pattern in the text, "they shall go and seek the Lord;" it was not now "howling upon their beds for corn and wine," as formerly; of which God says, "they cried not unto Me," *i.e.*, they did not make God the end of their prayers; as elsewhere God tells them: "When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye fast to Me, even unto Me?" In seventy years, they kept sevenscore fasts in Babylon; and yet, amongst them all, they kept not one day unto God; for though the duty looked upon God, they that did the duty did not look upon God; that is, they did not set up God, as their chief end, in fasting and praying: they mourned not so much for their sin, as for their captivity; or, if for their sin, they mourned for it not so much as God's dishonour, as the

cause of their captivity; they were not troubled so much, that they had by their sins walked contrary to God, as that God, by His judgments, had "walked contrary to them." They fasted and prayed, rather to get off their chains than to get off their sins; to get rid of the bondage of the Babylonians, than to get rid of the servitude of their own base lusts. But now, blessed be God, it was otherwise: "the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together" to what end? "They shall seek the Lord," *i.e.* they shall seek God for Himself, and not only for themselves; "going and weeping;" why? Not so much that He hath offended them, as that they have offended Him; for their sins, more than for their punishments; so it is more distinctly reported, "A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel; because they have perverted their way, and have forsaken the Lord their God." They had forgotten God before, not only in their sins, but in their duties; "they cried not to Me; they fasted not to Me; not at all unto Me." But now they remember the Lord their God; they seek His face; they labour to atone Him; yea, they seek Him to be their Lord, as well as their Saviour; to govern them, as well as to deliver them; "they ask the way to Zion;" they require as well, and more, how they should serve Him, as that He should save them. "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our king, He will save us." Beloved Christians, let us write after this copy, and in this great business we have in hand, let us seek God, and seek Him as a fountain of holiness, as well as a fountain of happiness. Take we heed of those base, low, dung-hill ends, which prevailed upon the Shechemites to enter into covenant with the God of the Hebrews, "shall not their cattle and substance be ours?" Let the two nations, and every soul in both the nations, that lift up the hand to the most high God, in this holy league and covenant, take heed

of, and abhor such unworthy thoughts, if they should be crowding in upon this service, and say unto them, as once Christ to Peter, "get thee behind me, Satan; thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men." You may remember how it fared with Hamor, and his son Shechem, and their people, to whom they propounded these base ends. God did not only disappoint them of their ends, but destroy them for them; their aims were to get the Hebrews' substance and cattle; but they lost their own, with lives to boot; "For it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. And the sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city; they took their sheep, and their oxen, and all their wealth." A most horrid and bloody treachery and cruelty in them, which stands as a brand of infamy upon their foreheads to this day; but a most just and righteous censure from God, and a caution to all succeeding generations, of prostituting heavenly and holy ordinances to earthly and sensual ends. Oh! let it be our "admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come, to the end, that we may not tempt God, as they also tempted." For, if God so much abhorred, and so severely punished these worldly respects in the men of the world; if God was so angry with poor purblind heathen, who had no other light for their guide, but the glimmering light of nature; how will His anger not only kindle, but flame in the avenging of such baseness upon Christians, a people of His own, who have the glorious light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to discover to them higher and heavenly ends and references? So that such a kingdom, people, or person, that should dare to bring such base carnal ends, to so spiritual and divine a contract, should be made a monument of the wrath and vengeance of divine justice; and while they propound to themselves safety, or riches, or greatness, from such an excellent ordinance, God makes it

by a strange but a righteous hand, an occasion of misery and ruin to them and their posterity, to many generations.

Christians, labour to set up God in this day and duty, wherein you engage yourselves so nigh unto Him; and if you would have heavenly blessings, see that you propound and pursue heavenly ends and aims; lest, while you come to make a covenant with God, you commit idolatry against Him. Whatsoever we make our ultimate and highest end, we make our God. If therefore you cannot make God your sole, your only end, yet be sure you make Him your choicest, your chiefest end; keep God in His own place; and let all self-respects whatsoever vail to His glory, according to that great rule, "whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Fifthly, To do this business to acceptation, we must do it cheerfully: as God loves a cheerful giver, so He loves a cheerful hearer, a cheerful petitioner, and a cheerful covenanter; and you have it in the text too, "come let us:" there is their readiness and cheerfulness to the work; as it was that for which the apostle doth commend his Macedonians in another service. "This they did, not as we hoped, but first gave themselves to the Lord." So these, they give themselves to God of their own accord, "come let us." Oh! that the ministers of the Gospel might have occasion to make the same boast of you, concerning this solemn ordinance before you, that they might say and rejoice, that you were a people, "that gave yourselves to the Lord," and unto the work of reformation, not by a Parliamentary fear, or by our ministerial compulsions; but, above our hopes, and beyond our expectations; of your own accord. See what a wonder, not only of cheerfulness, but of joy and triumph, is recorded of the Jews in king Asa's time, in their taking of the covenant. "They sware unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting; and with trumpets, and with cornets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath; for they had

sworn with all their hearts." There was indeed a severe mulct, a capital censure enacted, against those that should refuse, and reject this ordinance. "They should be put to death, whether great or small, whether man or woman." A very grievous censure; but it seems there was neither need, nor use for it; "for all Judah rejoiced at the oath;" the people looked upon this service, not as their pressure, but as their privilege; and therefore came to it, not with contentedness only, but an holy triumph, and so saved the magistrate and themselves the labour and charges of executing that sentence on delinquents. Oh! that this may be your wisdom and honour; that whatever penalty the honourable Parliaments of either nation, shall in their wisdom think fit to proportion to the grievous sin of rebelling against this covenant of the Lord; (and it seems by the instance before, that whatsoever penalty they shall ordain less than death, will not be justice only but moderation) I say, whatever it shall be, it may be rendered useless and invalid by the forwardness and rejoicings of an obedient people; that all England, as well as Scotland, would rejoice at the oath, and swear with all their hearts. For certainly it will not be so much our duty as our prerogative, as I have shewed you before, to enter into covenant with God and His people. It is the day of God's power: the Lord make you a "willing people." And, as a testimony of this willingness and joy, imitate the people here in the text, and stir up one another, and provoke one another to this holy service. "Let us join ourselves to the Lord." They express their charity, as well as their joy; they would not go to Zion alone; they call as many as they meet with them; "come let us join ourselves to the Lord." Oh, that this might be your temper! It is the very character of the evangelical church; as both Isaiah and Micah have described it; their words be the same. "Many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of

the Lord." Oh! that while neutrals and malignants do discourage one another, and set off one another, and embitter one another's spirits; God and His ministers might find you encouraging each other, and provoking one another, and labouring to oil one another's spirits, to this (as other) Gospel duty and prerogative; God could not choose, but be much pleased with such a sight. I might have made this a distinct qualification, but for brevity's sake, I couch it under this head. I come to the last. If you would be accepted, bring faith with you to this service: and that in a fourfold reference; 1. God. 2. The ordinance. 3. Ourselves. 4. Jesus Christ.

First, In reference unto God; "for he that will come to God," in any ordinance, "must believe that God is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." There is nothing God takes better at His people's hand, than when they come with their hearts as full of good thoughts of God as ever they can hold: such as, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us; we have waited for Him, we will be glad, and rejoice in His salvation." "He will save," "we will be glad," *i.e.*, God will undoubtedly give us occasion of gladness and triumph in His praises. Oh, sweet and blessed confidence of divine goodness! how well doth this become the children of such a father, who hath styled Himself the Father of mercies? Good thoughts of God do mightily please, and even engage God to shew mercy to His people. "Let us therefore come with boldness to the throne of grace;" even in this ordinance also, "that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in this time of our need."

Secondly, Let us bring faith in reference to the duty; as we are to believe well of God, so we are to believe well of the duty, that it is an ordinance wherein God will be sanctified, and found of them that seek Him. It is not enough, that we seek Him in His ordinance, but that we

believe it to be His ordinance. "Whatever is not of faith, is sin;" He speaks not of a faith that doth justify the person; but of a faith that doth justify the performance; that is, a thorough conviction of conscience, that the work, whatsoever it is, is such that the word will bear me out in it, such as God Himself doth approve. To do doubtfully, is to do sinfully; an ignorant person cannot please God.

Thirdly, Bring faith in reference to your own persons; believe that God will accept of them in this ordinance; whatever your success shall be in regard of the kingdom, yet you shall find acceptance in regard of your persons: so the church. "Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, those that remember Thee in Thy ways." When a people or person can say, as the church in another place, "In the way of Thy judgments, have we waited for Thee, O Lord; the desire of our soul is to Thy name, and to the remembrance of Thee," God will not stay till they come unto Him, but He will meet them half-way; "thou meetest him," like the father of the prodigal, while they are yet half-way, He will see, and run, and meet, and fall upon their neck; and while they weep at His feet, tears of contrition; He will weep over their necks, the tears of compassion: Oh! stir up yourselves, and engage your faith to believe, and expect a gracious entertainment. If God see you coming in the integrity and uprightness of your hearts, to enter into covenant with God, to take Him as your God, and to give up yourselves to be His people, to take away all from sin, and to give all to Jesus Christ; He will certainly take it well at your hands, and say unto you, "come, my people, and welcome; I will be your God, and you shall be my people;" which that you may not miss of,

In the *fourth* place, come believingly, in reference to Jesus Christ; be sure you bring a Christ with you; for "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Come without a Christ, and go without acceptance.

The day of atonement among the Jews was called the day of expiation; and the word *kippurim* is derived from an Hebrew root, that signifies to cover; and so the day of atonement was as much as to say, "the day of covering; the covering of nakedness: and the covering of sin." "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered." In which very name of the day, the ground or reason is held forth, why it was called a day of atonement, because it was a day of covering: wherein Christ was typified, Who is the "the covering of the saints; the long white robes of His righteousness" covering both their persons and performances; so that the nakedness of neither doth appear in the eyes of His Father; "He hath beheld no iniquity in Jacob, neither hath seen perverseness in Israel." Why? Not because there was no "iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel," for there was hardly any thing else; but because their iniquity and perverseness were hid from His eyes, being covered with the mantle of His Son's righteousness, the Messiah, which He had promised, and they so much looked for. Let us therefore in this service, as in all, "put on the Lord Jesus." That as Jacob in the garments of his elder brother Esau, so we in the garments of our elder brother Jesus, may find acceptance and obtain the blessing. And thus much be spoken concerning the first branch of this third query, how to acceptation?

I come now to the Second branch of it, and that is, How to perpetuity? Or, how may we perform this service so that it may be "an everlasting covenant, that may never be forgotten? To that end, take these few brief directions, and I have done.

First, Labour to come to this service with much soul-affliction for former violation of the covenant, either in refusing, or profaning, or breaking thereof: the foundations must be laid low, where we would build for many generations. In what deep sorrows had you need to lay the foundations

of this covenant, which you would have stand to eternity, that it may be "an everlasting covenant." This you have in the text; "they shall seek the Lord, going and weeping;" weeping in the sense of their former rebellions and apostasies, whereby they forfeited their faith, and brake their covenant with the Lord their God; and it was no ordinary slight business they made of it. "A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplication." They were not a few silent tears: no, they "lift up their voices and wept," as was said of Esau. They cried so loud, that they were heard a great way off. "A voice was heard upon the mountains;" and it was as bitter, as it was loud; "a great mourning, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon," when all Judah, Jerusalem, Jeremiah the prophet, and all the singers, bewailed the death of their good king Josiah, with a grievous lamentation, "and made it an ordinance forever." Oh! that as we have their service in hand, so we had their heads and their hearts, to manage it with rivers of tears, for our former vileness: that we could weep this day together, and afterward apart, as it is prophesied, "Every family apart, and our wives apart;" yea, and every soul apart, that we have dealt so evilly with so good a God, so unfaithfully with so faithful a God; that we could put our mouths in the dust, and smite upon our thigh, and be ashamed and confounded, for all the wickedness we have committed against God and His covenant, in any, or all these ways. Such a posture God will see us in, before He will shew us "the way to Zion;" before He will reveal to us the model and platform of reformation; for so was His charge to Ezekiel, "If they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the forms of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof, and write it in their sight."

Surely, this blessed prophecy hath an eye upon our times, for this is one of those days, as I told you before, wherein God will make good these gracious words unto His people; and God hath called together His Ezekiels, His ministers, to "shew the house," *i.e.*, the form and pattern of the evangelical house or church, unto the house of England and Scotland. "Shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed." That is, shew them the outside thereof, shew them "that there is such a house," which they never yet beheld with their eyes, that they may be humbled and ashamed of their former idolatries. And thus do our Ezekiels tell us, there is a way of gospel government, of such beauty and excellency, as our eyes never yet beheld, nor the eyes of our forefathers: to the end, that we may be ashamed of all our former idolatries and superstitions, our monstrous mixtures of popery and will-worship in the ordinances of Christ; and that we have not sooner inquired after the mind of Christ, how He will be worshipped in His house; but now, unless we be ashamed, *i.e.*, deeply and thoroughly humbled, for all that we have done unworthy of Christ and His worship, and the covenant of our God, we shall' never see the inside, that is, the laws and the ordinances, and the forms of this house, which are both various and curious; for so the variety and repetition of the words imply. The prophets are not to reveal these unto us, unless we be ashamed; God will either withdraw them from us, or, which is worse, withdraw Himself from them; so that our eyes shall never behold the Lord in the beauty of holiness; we shall not be admitted to see the beauty and glory of such a reformation, as our souls long for. And as God will see us in this posture, before He reveal to us the model and platform of reformation: so also, till we be in such a posture of deep humiliation, for our former abominations, we shall never be stedfast and faithful in the covenant of God. Till our hearts be throughly

broken for covenant-breach, we will not pass much for breaking covenant, upon every fresh temptation. Yea, till that time we be humbled, not for a day only, and so forth: but unless we labour to maintain an habitual frame of godly sorrow upon our hearts for our covenant-violations, shall we ever be to purpose conscientious of our covenant? A sad remembrance of old sins is a special means to prevent new. When every solemn remembrance of former vileness, can fetch tears from our eyes, and blood from our hearts, and fill our faces with an holy shame, the soul will be holily shy of the like abominations, and of all occasions and tendencies thereunto: "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me." When old sins cost dear, new sins will not find an easy entertainment. When old sins are new afflictions, when the remembrance of them is as wormwood and gall, the soul will not easily be bewitched to drink a new draught of that poisoned cup any more. Christian, believe me, or thou mayest find it by experience too true, when thou hast forgot old sins, or canst remember them without new affliction of soul, thou art near a fall; look to thyself, and cry to God for preventing grace. There will be great hopes we shall be faithful in our new covenant, when we come with a godly sense and sorrow for our abuse of old, and labour to maintain it upon our spirits.

Secondly, If you would have this covenant to be a perpetual covenant, labour to see old scores crossed; do not only mourn for thy covenant-unfaithfulness; but labour to get thy pardon written and sealed to thee in the blood of the covenant. There is virtue enough in the blood of the covenant, to expiate the guilt of thy sins against the covenant. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." Their sins of idolatry, were sins

especially against their covenant; idolatry being the violation of the marriage-knot, between God and a people; yet even from them doth God promise to cleanse them, upon their repentance and conversion. The blood of the covenant, compared to water for the cleansing virtue thereof, should cleanse them from their covenant defilements. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet, return again to me, saith the Lord." It is a mighty encouragement to renew our covenants with God, that He is so ready to pardon the breach of old; and the sense of this pardon is a mighty engagement and strengthening, to keep our new covenants. Oh! for God to say to a poor soul, "be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." "And I have blotted out thy sins as a cloud, and thy transgressions as a thick cloud." All thy unkindnesses and unfaithfulnesses, thy treacherous dealings against the covenant, shall be forgotten; they shall do thee no harm. This will mightily strengthen the hands, and fortify the heart, and even make it impenetrable and impregnable against all the solicitations and importunities of old temptations: see a notable instance of this, "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him." "I will be as the dew to Israel." "His branches shall spread." "They that dwell under His shadow shall return." What follows these gracious promises? Why, Ephraim shall say, "What have I to do any more with idols?" He that before was so inseparably joined to idols, that he could not be divorced from them; "Ephraim is joined to idols." All the blows that God gave him, tho' God should have beaten him to pieces, as he himself afterward confessed, could not beat him off from his idols; insomuch, that God at length gave him over, as an hopeless child. "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone." Yet, no sooner doth this Ephraim hear of a pardon,

and of the love of God to him, but the bonds between him and his idols are dissolved, and away he thrusts them with indignation. Ephraim shall say, "What have I to do with idols?" Or as the prophet Isaiah expresseth it, "Ye shall defile the covering of the graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold; thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth, thou shalt say unto it, get thee hence." And thus it is with a people, or a person, when once "God sheds abroad His Spirit in their hearts," and makes them "hear joy and gladness," in speaking, or sealing, a pardon upon their souls; they that before were joined to their idols, drunkenness, uncleanness, covetousness, pride, ways of false worship, old superstitious customs, and ceremonies, and the like; so that there was no parting of them; or those who had long been grappling and conflicting with their strong corruptions and old temptations, and in those conflicts had received many a foil, and got many a fall to the wounding of their consciences, and cutting deep gashes upon their souls; now they stand up with a kind of omnipotence among them, no temptation is able to stand before them; they say to their idols, whether sinful company, or sinful customs, "get ye hence, and what have I to do any more with idols?" What have I to do with such and such base company? What have I to do with such base filthy lusts? "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine." Christ is mine, and I am His. The reason of it is, because pardon begets love; "she loved much, because much was forgiven her." And love begets strength: "for love is as strong as death": yea, stronger than sin or death; "They loved not their lives to the death," and "I count not my life dear," says Paul, when once the man had tasted of the free grace of God in the pardon of his sins, "who before was a blasphemer, and a persecuter, and injurious." He could find in his heart, not only to lay down a lust, but to lay down his life too for Jesus Christ:

"for whose sake, (saith he), I have suffered the loss of all things; and I count not my life dear, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

My beloved Christians, if you would be faithful in the covenant of God, into which you are now entering, sue out your pardon for what is past; yea, entreat the Lord, not only to give a pardon, but to speak a pardon, and seal a pardon upon your hearts; and never give the Lord rest, till the Lord have given rest to your souls. "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

Thirdly, If you would make an unchangeable covenant, with an unchangeable God, come furnished with and maintain upon your hearts, an abundant measure of self-distrust; labour to be thoroughly convinced of your own nothingness and disability. "By his own strength shall no man prevail." Surely, thine own treachery may inform thee, and thine own backslidings may convince thee, to confess with Jeremiah, "O Lord, I know (I know it by sad experience) the way of man is not in himself: It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Staupitius confessed to Luther, that he thought in his very conscience he had above a thousand times renewed his covenant with God, and as many times broken it: a sad confession, and yet how many among us may take up the like lamentation! Be convinced of it, I beseech you, and maintain the sense of this conviction upon your spirits. Say oft within yourself, I am nothing, worse than nothing. This treacherous heart of mine will betray me into the breach of my covenant, if the Lord leave me to myself, I shall one day fall by the hand of my corruptions. He that walks tremblingly, walks safely.

In the *Fourth* place, be often renewing your resolutions. It was the exhortation of that good man to the new converts at Antioch, where they were first called Christians, "that

they should cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart." This covenant, I have shewed you, is the ordinance whereby you cleave unto the Lord, the joining ordinance. Oh! do it with full purpose of heart, and be often putting on fresh and frequent resolutions, not to suffer every base temptation of Satan, every deceitful, or malignant solicitation of the world, every foolish and carnal suggestion of the flesh, to bribe and seduce you from that fidelity which you swear this day to Jesus Christ and the kingdoms. A well grounded resolution is half the work, and the better half too; for he that hath well resolved, hath conquered his will; and he that hath conquered his will, hath overcome the greatest difficulty: no such difficulty in spiritual things, as to prevail with one's own heart. With these cords, therefore, of well bottomed resolutions, be oft binding yourselves to your covenant, as once Ulysses did himself to his mast, that you may not be bewitched by any Syrenian song of the flesh, world, or the devil, to violate your holy covenant, and drown yourselves in a sea of perdition. And to that end, it would not be altogether useless, to fix your covenant in some place of your houses, or bed-chamber, where it may be oftenest in your eyes, to admonish you of your religious and solemn engagements, under which you have brought your own souls. The Jews had their "phylacteries, or borders upon their garments," which they did wear also upon their heads, and upon their arms; which, tho' they abused afterward, not only to pride, making them broader than their first size or pattern, in ostentation and boasting of their holiness, our Saviour condemns in the scribes and pharisees. And to superstition, for they used them as superstitious helps in prayer, which they coloured under a false derivation of the word in the Hebrew, yet God indulged them in this ceremony, as an help for their memories, to put them in remembrance to keep the law of the Lord. And God Himself seems to use this art of memory, as it

were, when, comforting His people, He tells them, "behold I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands, thy walls are continually before Me."

I must confess, the nature of man is very prone to abuse and pervert such natural helps to idolatry and superstition. This instance of the Jews, wretchedly improving their phylacteries to superstitious purposes, their idolizing of the brazen serpent; and thereby of a cure, turning it into a plague, a snare, with the like, are sufficient testimonies. And we see how the papists have abused and adulterated the lawful use of natural mediums, to the unlawful use of artificial mediums of their own inventions: images and crucifixes, first to help their memories, and stir up their devotions in their prayers, and then to pray unto them, as mediums of divine worship. The more cautious had Christians need be in the use of those mediums, which either God hath ordained by special command for the help of our memories, and stirring up of our graces, as the visible elements in the sacraments; or such natural advantages, which moral equity allows us for the help of our understandings and memories in spiritual concernments; such is this, we are now speaking of; it being the same with the use of books and tables. Tertullian tells us of a superstitious custom among the ancient Christians, that they were wont to set up images over their doors and chimneys, to keep witches when they came into their houses from bewitching their children; and so by a little kind of witchcraft, prevented witchcraft. But surely, to set up this covenant, where we might often see and read what engagements we have laid upon our souls, (and I could heartily wish Christians would do it at least once a week) it will be an innocent and warrantable spell, to render the witchery of the flesh, world, and devil, fruitless and ineffectual upon our spirits, while the soul may say with David, "Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praise unto Thee."

But *Fifthly*, consider often and seriously, who it is that must uphold your resolutions: even He that upholds heaven and earth: no less power will do it; "for you are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." It is God that first gives the resolution, and then must uphold, and bring it into act; "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure," and therefore labour, I beseech you, to do these two things.

First. Put all your resolutions into the hands of prayer: David was a man of an excellent spirit, full of holy resolves. "I will walk in mine integrity," "And I will keep Thy testimonies." And again, "I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep Thy righteous judgments." And yet again, "do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee?" "I hate them with a perfect hatred." A thousand such sweet resolutions doth that precious servant of God breathe out all along the Psalms; and yet so jealous the holy man is of himself, that he never trusts himself with his own resolutions; and therefore shall you find him always clapping a petition upon a resolution, as in the quoted places. "I will walk in mine integrity. Redeem me, and be merciful unto me. I will keep Thy testimonies, oh! forsake me not utterly." Though Thou hast let me fall fearfully, suffer me not to fall finally. And so when he had said, "I have sworn, and will not repent," he presently adds (within a word or two), "quicken me, O Lord, according to Thy word." And again, "accept, I beseech Thee, the free-will offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me Thy judgments." God must teach him, as to make, so to make good the free-will offerings of his mouth, *i.e.*, his promises and vows. And so, when he had made that appeal to God, "do not I hate them that hate Thee, Lord?" he presently betakes himself to his prayers, "search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way

everlasting." Mark, I pray, "search me, try me, know my heart, know my thoughts, see whether there be any wicked way, lead me." He will neither trust himself for what he is, nor for what he shall be; "try me," he dares not trust his own trial: "lead me," he dares not trust his own resolutions: such a sweet holy jealousy of himself doth he breathe forth, with all his heavenly purposes and resolutions. Oh! all you that would make an everlasting covenant with God, imitate holy David, upon every holy resolution, clap an earnest petition, say, I will reform my life; oh! redeem me, and be merciful unto me. I will set up Christ in my heart, I will labour to walk worthy of Him in my life: oh! forsake me not utterly, Lord; leave me not to myself, I have sworn, and am utterly purposed in all my duties I owe to God and man, to amend my life, and to go before others in the example of a real reformation. O Lord, teach me Thy judgments: quicken me, O Lord, according to Thy word. Thy vows are upon me, that I will, according to my place and calling, endeavour to preserve reformation in Scotland, to procure reformation in England; that I will in like manner endeavour the extirpation of popery and prelacy; to preserve the rights and liberties of parliaments; discover incendiaries; endeavour the preservation of peace between the two kingdoms; defend all those that enter into this league and covenant, that I will never make defection to the contrary part, or to give myself to a detestable indifferency or neutrality. And this covenant I have made in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to perform the same, as I shall answer at that great day. But now, add with David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." In a word, put your covenant into frequently renewed resolutions: resolutions into prayer, and prayer, and all into the hands of God. It is God that must

gird thee with strength, to perform all thy vows. This, the close of this blessed covenant, into which we enter this day, doth teach us. "Humbly beseeching the Lord to strengthen us by His Spirit; for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings." And the covenant in the text, was surely inlaid with prayer, while they engage themselves to seek the Lord, not only to shew them the way to Zion, but to give them strength to walk in that way.

Let it be your wisdom and piety, my brethren, to imitate both; oh pray, and be much in prayer, and be often in prayer: pray daily over the covenant; as you this day lift up your hands to swear to the most high God in this covenant, so lift up your hands every day to pray to that God for grace to keep this covenant. Let sense of self-insufficiency keep open the sluice of prayer, that that may let fresh streams of strength every day into your souls, to make good your vows; when you be careless to pray over the covenant, you will be careless to keep the covenant; when you cease to pray, you will cease to pay. If you will be watchful in praying over your vows, prayer will make you watchful in paying your vows. If you will be faithful in crying to God, God will be faithful in hearing and helping. Pray therefore, pray over every good purpose and resolution of heart towards the covenant of God which conscience shall suggest, or the Spirit of God shall breathe into your bosoms, at this present or any time hereafter; as David once prayed over that good frame of spirit, which he observed in his people; what time they offered so willingly and liberally to the preparing for the house of God; "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob, our fathers, keep this for ever, in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart, and prepare their heart unto Thee." To every command, God is pleased to add a promise; so that what is a command in one place, is a promise in another. "Circumcise the foreskin of your heart." But it is a promise, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart,

and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord." Again, "make you a new heart." So saith the word of command: "a new heart will I give you:" so speaks the word of promise. Once more, "little children abide in Him," that is the command. Which in the immediate verse before is a gracious promise, "you shall abide in Him." Divers more such instances I could give you; and why thus? Surely, the command teacheth us our duty, the promise our weakness and insufficiency to perform that duty. The command finds us work; the promise finds us strength: the command is to keep us from being idle; the promise to keep us from being discouraged. Well, let us imitate God, and, as He couples a command and a promise, so let us couple a resolution and a petition. As God seconds and backs His command with His promise, so let us second and back our promises with our prayers; the one in sense of our duty, the other in sense of our weakness; by the one, to bring our hearts up to God; by the other, to bring God down to our hearts: resolve and petition, promise and pray, and the Lord "prepare your heart to pray, and cause His ear to hear."

Secondly, Since God only must uphold your desires, walk continually as in His presence; stability is only to be found in the presence of God: so far we live an unchangeable life, as we walk and live in the presence of an unchangeable God. The saints in Heaven know no vicissitudes, or changes in their holy frame and temper of spirit, because they are perfected in the beholding of His face; "with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of changing:" and so far as the saints on earth can keep God in their presence so far the presence of God will keep them. "I have set the Lord always before me; and because He is at my right hand, therefore I shall not be moved," sang David of himself literally, and in the person of Christ typically: the privilege was made good to both, so far as either made good the duty. David, according to his degree, and proportion of grace,

set God before him, placed Him on his right hand; and so long as he could keep God's presence, the presence of God kept him; it kept him from sin, "I have kept myself from mine iniquity." How so? Why, "I was upright before Him," in the former part of the same verse. So long as he walked before God, in God's presence; so long he walked upright, and kept himself from his iniquity; or rather God's presence kept him: and, as it kept him from sin, so it kept him from fear also; "tho' I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will not fear." Mark what he saith, though he walk, not step; and walk through, not step across; and through, not a dark entry, or a church-yard in the night-time, but a valley, a large, long, vast place; how many miles long I know not; and this not a valley of darkness only, but of death, where he should see nothing but visions of death, and not bare death, but the shadow of death: the shadow is the dark part of the thing; so that the shadow of death, is the darkest side of death: death in its most hideous and horrid representations; and yet behold, when he comes out at the farther end, and a man would have thought to have found him all in a cold sweat, his hair standing upright, his eyes set in his head, and the man beside himself. Behold, I say, he doth not so much as change colour, his hand shakes not, his heart fails not; as he went in, he comes out; and though he should go back again the same way, he tells you, "I will not fear." How comes this to pass? How comes the man to be so undaunted? Why, he will tell you in the very same verse, speaking to God, "For Thou art with me." God's presence kept him from fear, in the midst of death and horror. Thus it was, I say, with David, while he could keep God in his presence, he was immoveable, impregnable; you might as soon have stirred a rock, as stirred him, "I shall not be moved." Indeed, so long as he was upon the rock, he was as immoveable as the rock itself; but alas! sometime he

lost the sight of his God, and then he was like other men; "Thou didst hide Thy face from me, and I was troubled." When God hid His face from him, or he hid his eyes from God; then how easily is he moved? Fear breaks in, "I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul." Sin breaks in, yea, one sin upon the heels of another; the adulterous act, upon the adulterous look, and murder upon adultery, as you know in that sad business of Uriah the Hittite: once off from his Rock, and he is as weak as dust, not able to stand before the least temptation of sin or fear; and therefore as soon as he comes to himself again, he cries, "Oh! lead me to the Rock that is higher than I;" to my Rock, Lord, to my Rock. But now, the Lord Jesus, the antitype of David here in this Psalm, because He made good this, (duty shall I call it?) "For in Him dwelt the fulness of the God-head bodily." To Him therefore was this privilege made good perfectly in the highest degree: for tho' He had temptations that never man had, and was to do that which never man did; and to suffer that which never man suffered; the contradiction of sinners; the rage of hell: and the wrath of God: yet, because He set the Lord always at His right hand; yea, indeed was always at the right hand of God; therefore He was not moved, but overcame even by suffering.

Beloved, you see where stability in covenant is to be had: even in the presence of God. Labour, I beseech you, to walk in His presence, and to set Him always at your right hand; behold, it shall keep you, so that you shall not be moved; or, if you be moved, you shall not be removed; if you stumble you shall not fall; or, if you fall, you shall not fall away; you shall rise again. There is a double advantage in it. *First*, It will keep your hearts in awe; he that sets God in his presence, dares not sin in His presence: "God sees," will make the heart say, "How shall I do this great evil, and sin against God?" *Secondly*, There is joy in

it; "In Thy presence is fulness of joy." It is true, in its proportion of grace, as well as of glory; and joy will strengthen and stablish, as I shewed you before, "The joy of the Lord is your strength." As long as the child is in its father's eye, and the father in its eye, it is secure. "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee." It will hold as well in the evils of sin, as in the evils of punishment: well, the Lord make you know these precious truths in an experimental manner. I have held you too long: but the business requires it. Remember, I beseech you, it is God that must uphold your desires and resolutions; and therefore, 1. Be much in prayer. And, 2. Set yourselves in the presence of God. He lives unchangeably that lives in the unchangeable God.

In the *Sixth*, and last place, if thou wouldst make an everlasting covenant with God, that shall never be forgotten, look up to Jesus Christ, go to Jesus Christ. He must help, and He must strengthen, and He must keep thee, or else thou wilt never be able to "keep thy covenant;" hear Him, else, "without me ye can do nothing." And as Christ speaks thus in the negative; so you may hear the apostle speaking by blessed experience in the affirmative; "I can do all things through Jesus Christ, Who strengtheneth me." Observe, I pray, "Without Me ye can do nothing. Through Christ I can do all things." Nothing, all things. There is a good deal of difference between two men; take one without Christ, and, be his parts never so excellent, his resolutions never so strong, his engagements never so sacred, "he can do nothing;" unless it be to "break his covenant and vows," as Samson brake his cords like threads scorched with the fire; and, take the other with a Christ standing by him, and be he in himself never so weak and mean, unlearned and ungifted, lo, as if he were clothed with omnipotency, "he can do all things," he can subdue such corruptions,

conquer such temptations, perform such duties, and in such a manner, do such things, suffer such things, (and in all these keep his covenant with God) as to other men, and to himself before, were so many impossibilities; he could not before, now he can. Nothing before, all things now. All things fit for an unglorified saint to do; all things God expects from him; all things in a gospel sense; all things comparatively to other men, and to himself, when he was another man. See, I beseech you, how without a Christ, and thro' a Christ, makes one man differ from another; yea, and from himself, as much as can and cannot; all things and nothing; impotency and omnipotency, "Without me ye can do nothing." "Through Christ I can do all things." If therefore you would make a covenant with Eternity to eternity, study Christ more than ever, labour to "know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." And therein these two things,

First, Labour to get interest in Christ. Interest is the ground of influence; union the fountain or spring of communion; so Christ, "as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." There you have the truth and the simile of it; no fruit from Christ, without being and abiding in Christ; there is truth: illustrated and proved by the vine and the branch; there the simile, which is prosecuted and enlarged by our Saviour.

And, as all communion ariseth from union, so look what the union is, such is the communion; Christ was filled with the fulness of God because united to God; the saints receive of the fulness of Christ, because united to Christ. "I in them, and Thou in Me." Only here is the difference. Christ's union with His Father was personal, infinite, and substantial, and therefore the communications were answerable, "For God gave not the Spirit by measure unto Him." But the saints' union with Christ, being of an inferior nature; their communications also are proportional; yet such as serve

poor creatures to all blessed saving purposes. And therefore with Paul, labour to "be found in Christ," that so you may know experimentally the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings. All the power and virtue that are in Jesus Christ, are only for them that are in Him, as the branch in the root, as the members in the body.

Christ is called the covenant of God. "I will give thee for a covenant of the people." As Calvin well expounds it, *sponsor fœderis*, the surety or undertaker of the covenant, of that second new covenant, between God and His people, not the Jews only, but the Gentiles also. A surety on both sides: the surety of God's covenant to them; "For all the promises of God are in Him, yea, and in Him, Amen." He sees them all made good to the heirs of promise. And Christ again is the surety of their covenant unto God; for He undertakes to make good all their covenants, and vows, and promises unto God. "Those that Thou gavest Me, I have kept," saith Christ. "And I live (saith Paul), yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." So that it is Christ who makes the covenant good on both sides, as God's to His people, so His people's to God; and so it follows in that place of Isaiah, "I have given thee for a covenant to the people, to establish the earth;" establishment must come from Christ, the undertaker, the surety of the covenant; as He paid the debt for the time past, so He must see the articles of the covenant kept for the time to come. For want of such an undertaker or surety, the first covenant miscarried: It was between God and the creature, without a mediator; and so the creature changing, the covenant was dissolved; but the second, God meant should not miscarry, and therefore puts it into sure hands; "I have laid help upon One that is mighty," speaking of Christ, and "I will give Thee for a covenant to the people." God hath furnished Christ wherewithal to be a surety; to make good His covenant to His people, and their covenant to Him.

But now, He hath this stock of all-sufficiency for none but these that are His members, He actually undertakes for none but those that are actually in Him; "These that Thou hast given Me I have kept." He keeps none but them whom the Father hath given Him; given Him so as to be in them, and they in Him. "I in them, they in Me." Well, if thou wouldst be unchangeable in thy covenant, get interest in Christ who is the covenant; the unchangeable covenant; "The Amen, the faithful and true witness." "Yesterday and to-day, and the same for ever." Get interest, "count all things loss and dung, that thou mayst win Christ, and be found in Christ." Yea, do not only labour to get interest, but prove thy interest. Take not up a matter of so infinite concernment upon trust: all that thou dost covenant to God, and that God doth covenant to thee, depends upon it; and therefore, "work it out with fear and trembling, and give all diligence to make it sure unto thy soul." Study evidences, and be content with none but such as will bear weight in the "balance of the sanctuary;" such as the word will secure; such as to which the word will bear witness, that they are inconsistent with any Christless man or woman, whatsoever; and pray with unwearying supplications that God will not only give thee interest, but clear thy interest, and seal up interest upon thy soul and thee, to the day of redemption.

Second, study influence when in Christ, then hast thou right to draw virtue from Christ, for behold, all the fulness that dwells in Christ is thine; all that life, and strength, and grace, and redemption, that is held forth in the promise, it is all laid up in Christ, as in a magazine; and by virtue of thy interest in, and union with the Lord Jesus, it is all become thine. Hence you hear the believing soul making her boast of Christ, as before, for righteousness so also for strength. "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." As righteousness for acceptance, so strength

also for performance of such duties, as God in His covenant doth require and expect at the believer's hands: I have no strength of mine own, but in Christ I have enough; "In the Lord I have righteousness and strength." Christ is the lord-keeper, or lord high steward, or lord treasurer; to receive in and lay out, for and to all that are in covenant with the Father. And this is one main branch of God's covenant with the Redeemer, that He gives out to the heirs of promise, wherewithal to "keep their covenant with God;" so that they never depart from Him. "As for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the Lord, My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." These be the words of God the Father to the Redeemer, concerning all His spiritual seed; "the Redeemer shall come to Zion." And that Spirit, and these words of life and grace which were upon the Redeemer, must be propagated to all His believing seed; by virtue whereof, their covenant with God, shall in its proportion be like God's covenant with them (for indeed the one is but the counterpart of the other) unchangeable, everlasting. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart away from Me."

Now therefore, my brethren, since there is enough in Christ, study how to draw it out: indeed it will require a great deal of holy skill to do it; it requires wisdom to draw out the excellencies of a man: "Counsel in the heart of a man is deep, but a man of understanding will draw it out." It is a fine art to be able to pierce a man, that is like a vessel full of wine, and set him a running; but to draw out influence and virtue from the Lord Jesus is one of the most secret hidden mysteries in the life of a Christian: indeed

we may complain, "the well is deep, and we have nothing to draw withal." But labour to get your bucket of faith, that you may be able to "draw water out of this well of salvation." Labour by vital acts of a powerful faith; set to work in meditation and prayer, to draw virtue and influence from Jesus Christ; the mouth of prayer, and the breathings of faith from an heart soakt and steept in holy meditations, applied to Jesus Christ, will certainly (tho' perhaps insensibly) draw virtue from Him. Behold, faith drew virtue from Christ by a touch of His garments; shall it not much more draw out that rich and precious influence, by applying of Him in the promises, and in His offices unto our souls? Consider, O Christian, whoever thou art, even thou that art in Christ, consider, God hath not trusted thee with grace enough before hand, for one month, no, not for a week, a day; nay, thou hast not grace enough before hand for the performance of the next duty, or the conquering of the next temptation; nor for the expediting thyself out of the next difficulty; and why so? But that thou mayest learn to live by continual dependence upon Jesus Christ, as Paul did, "The life that I now live in the flesh, I live it by the faith of the Son of God." Paul lived by fresh influence drawn from Christ by faith, every day and hour; study that life, it is very mysterious, but exceeding precious. Had we our stock before hand, we should quickly spend all, and prove bankrupts: God hath laid up all our treasure of "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption in Jesus Christ," and will have us live from hand to mouth, that so we might be safe, and God's free grace be exalted: "It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end your promise might be sure to all the seed." Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of this heavenly calling, look up to Jesus Christ, who is the covenant of His Father, and your covenant; lo, He calls you. "Look unto Me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth." Surely they are worthy to perish, who will not bestow a look upon

salvation: oh, look humbly, and look believingly, and look continually; look for interest, look for influence, look for righteousness, look for strength; and let Jesus Christ be all in all to thy soul: thou wilt never be any thing, nor do any thing in Christianity, till thou comest to live in and upon Jesus Christ, and Him only: humbly entreat the Lord, and give Him no rest, that He will make a covenant with thee in Christ, which shall keep thee, and then thou wilt be able to keep thy covenant: look up to Christ for covenant grace, to keep covenant-engagement, and so shalt thou do this service in a gospel sense, to acceptation, to perpetuity.

I have now done with these three queries; What? Why? How? How to (1) Acceptation? and (2) Perpetuity? I know much more might be added, but the work to which we are to address ourselves, will take up much time; the Lord set home what hath been spoken.

Only give me leave to tell you thus much in a word, for the close of all; as this covenant prospers with us, so we are like to prosper under it; the welfare of the kingdom and of thy soul, is bound up now in this covenant: for I remember what God speaks of the kingdom of Israel, brought into covenant now with the king of Babylon, to serve him, and to be his vassals; that "by keeping covenant it should stand." And the breaking of that covenant was the breaking of Zedekiah and his whole family and kingdom. Now was covenant-breach, or fidelity the foundation of stability or ruin to that kingdom, which was struck, but with a dying man; how much more is the rise and fall of this kingdom; yea, of these two kingdoms, bound up in the observation or forfeiture of this covenant, which we make this day with the living God? You that wish well to the kingdoms, that would not see the downfall and ruin thereof; be from henceforth more conscientious of your covenant, than ever heretofore; for surely, upon the success of this covenant we stand or fall; as we deal with the covenant, God will

deal with us; if we slight the covenant, God will slight us; if we have mean thoughts of the covenant, God will have mean thoughts of us; if we forget the covenant, God will forget us; if we break the covenant, we may look that God shall break these two nations, and break us all to pieces; if we reject it, God will reject us; if we regard our covenant, God will regard His covenant, and regard us too; if we remember the covenant, God will remember His, and remember us; if we keep the covenant, the covenant will keep us, and our posterity for ever.

There are a people of whom I hear God speaking gracious words. "Surely they are My people, children that will not lie." My people, Mine by covenant; I have brought them into the bond of the covenant: I have made My covenant with them, and they have made their covenant with Me: and they be children that will not lie: I know they will deal no more as a lying and treacherous generation with Me, but will be a faithful people in their covenant; and I will be a faithful God unto them; "I will be their Saviour, they will serve Me, and I will save them."

Now the Lord make us such a people unto Him, children that will not lie, and He be such a God to us; He be our Saviour, a Saviour to both kingdoms, and every soul that makes this covenant; to save us from sin, and to save us from destruction; to save us from our enemies without, and to save us from our enemies within; to save us from the devil, and to save us from the world, and to save us from ourselves; to save us from the lusts of men, and to save us from our own lusts: to save us, and to save our posterity: to save us from Rome, and save us from hell; to save us from wrath present, and from wrath to come; to save us here, and to save us hereafter; to save us to Himself in grace, and to save us with Himself in glory, to all eternity, for Christ's sake, Amen, and Amen.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE LORDS AND COMMONS,

Issued February 2, 1644.

WHEREAS a covenant for the preservation and reformation of religion, the maintenance and defence of laws and liberties, hath been thought a fit and excellent means to acquire the favour of Almighty God towards the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland; and likewise to unite them, and by uniting, to strengthen and fortify them against the common enemy of the true reformed religion, peace and prosperity of these kingdoms: and whereas both houses of parliament in England, the cities of London and Westminster, and the kingdom of Scotland, have already taken the same; it is now ordered and ordained by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, that the same covenant be solemnly taken, in all places throughout the kingdom of England, and dominion of Wales. And for the better and more orderly taking thereof, these directions ensuing are appointed and enjoined strictly to be followed.

Instructions for the taking of the Solemn League and Covenant throughout the Kingdom.

1. That the speakers of both Houses of Parliament do speedily send, to the lord general, and all other commanders in chief, and governors of towns, forts, castles, and

garrisons; as also to the earl of Warwick, lord high admiral of England, true copies of the said Solemn League and Covenant, to the end it may be taken by all officers and soldiers under their several commands.

2. That all the knights and burgesses now in parliament, do take special care, speedily to send down into their several counties (which are, or shall hereafter be under the power of the parliament) a competent number of true copies of the said league and covenant, unto the committees of parliament, in their several counties; and that the said committees do within six days at the most disperse the said copies to every parish-church or chapel in their several counties, to be delivered unto the ministers, church-wardens, or constables of the several parishes.

3. That the said committees be required to return a certificate of the day when they received the said copies, as also the day they sent them forth, and to what parishes they have sent them; which certificate they are to return to the clerk of the parliament, appointed for the commons' house, that so an account may be given of it, as there shall be occasion.

4. That the several ministers be required to read the said covenant publicly unto their people, the next Lord's day after they receive it, and prepare their people for it, against the time that they shall be called to take it.

5. That the said league and covenant be taken by the committees of parliament, in the place where they reside, and tendered also to the inhabitants of the town, within seven days after it comes to the said committee's hands.

6. That the said committees after they have taken it themselves, do speedily disperse themselves through the said counties, so as three or four of them be together, on days appointed, at the chief places of meeting, for the several divisions of the said counties: and summon all the ministers, church-wardens, constables, and other officers

unto that place, where, after a sermon preached by one appointed by the committee for that purpose, they cause the same minister to tender the league and covenant unto all such ministers, and other officers, to be taken and subscribed by them, in the presence of the said committees.

7. That the said committees do withal give the said ministers in charge, to tender it unto all the rest of their parishioners the next Lord's day, making then unto their said parishioners some solemn exhortation, concerning the taking and observing thereof: and that the said committees do also return to the several parishes, the names of all such as have taken the covenant before them, who yet shall also subscribe their names in the book or roll with their neighbours, in their several parishes: and if any minister refuse or neglect to appear at the said summons, or refuse to take the said covenant before the committee, or to tender it to his parish, that then the committees be careful to appoint another minister to do it in his place.

8. That this league and covenant be tendered to all men, within the several parishes, above the age of eighteen, as well lodgers as inhabitants.

9. That it be recommended to the earl of Manchester, to take special care, that it be tendered and taken in the university of Cambridge.

10. That for the better encouragement of all sorts of persons to take it, it be recommended to the assembly of divines, to make a brief declaration, by way of exhortation, to all sorts of persons to take it, as that which they judge not only lawful, but (all things considered) exceeding expedient and necessary, for all that wish well to religion, the king and kingdom, to join in, and to be a singular pledge of God's gracious goodness to all the three kingdoms.

11. That if any minister do refuse to take, or to tender the covenant, or any other person, or persons, do not take it the Lord's day that it is tendered, that then it be tendered

to them again the Lord's day following, and if they still continue to refuse it, that then their names be returned by the minister that tenders it, and by the church-wardens, or constables, unto the committees, and by them to the house of commons, that such further course may be taken with them, as the houses of parliament shall see cause.

12. That all such persons as are within the several parishes, when notice is given of the taking of it, and do absent themselves from the church at the time of taking it, and come not in afterwards, to the minister and church-wardens or other officers, to take it in their presence before the return be made, be returned as refusers.

13. The manner of the taking it to be thus: "The minister to read the whole covenant distinctly and audibly in the pulpit, and, during the time of the reading thereof, the whole congregation to be uncovered, and at the end of his reading thereof, all to take it standing, lifting up their right hands bare, and then afterwards to subscribe it severally by writing their names, (or their marks, to which their names are to be added) in a parchment roll, or a book, whereinto the covenant is to be inserted, purposely provided for that end, and kept as a record in the parish."

14. That the Assembly of Divines do prepare an exhortation for the better taking of the covenant: and that the said exhortation, and the declaration of the kingdoms of England and Scotland, joined in the armies for the vindication and defence of their religion, liberties and laws, against the popish, prelatical and malignant party, and passed the thirty of January last, be publicly read, when the covenant is read, according to the fourth and fifth articles: and that a sufficient number of the copies of the said declaration be sent by the persons, appointed to send the true copies of the said covenant, in the first and second articles.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT:

EXHORTATION BY THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

If the power of religion or solid reason, if loyalty to the king and piety to their native country, or love to themselves and natural affection to their posterity, if the example of men touched with a deep sense of all these, or extraordinary success from God thereupon, can awaken an embroiled, bleeding remnant to embrace the sovereign and only means of their recovery, there can be no doubt but this solemn league and covenant will find, wheresoever it shall be tendered, a people ready to entertain it with all cheerfulness and duty.

And were it not commended to the kingdom by the concurrent encouragement of the honourable Houses of Parliament, the Assembly of Divines, the renowned city of London, multitudes of other persons of eminent rank and quality in this nation, and the whole body of Scotland, who have all willingly sworn and subscribed it, with rejoicing at the oath, so graciously seconded from heaven already by blasting the counsels, and breaking the power of the enemy more than ever; yet it goeth forth in its own strength, with such convincing evidence of equity, truth and righteousness, as may raise in all (not wilfully ignorant, or miserably seduced) inflamed affections to join with their brethren in this happy bond, for putting an end to the present miseries, and for saving of both king and kingdom from utter ruin, now so strongly and openly laboured by the popish faction,

and such as have been bewitched and besotted by that viperous and bloody generation.

For what is there almost in this covenant, which was not for substance either expressed, or manifestly included in that solemn protestation of May 5th, 1641, wherein the whole kingdom stands engaged until this day? The sinful neglect whereof doth (as we may justly fear) open one floodgate the more to let in all these calamities upon the kingdom, and cast upon it a necessity of renewing covenant, and of entering into this.

If it be said, the extirpation of prelacy, to wit, the whole hierarchical government (standing, as yet, by the known laws of the kingdom) is new and unwarrantable: this will appear to all impartial understandings, (tho' new) to be not only warrantable, but necessary; if they consider (to omit what some say, that this government was never formally established by any laws of this kingdom at all) that the very life and soul thereof is already taken from it by an act passed in this present parliament, so as (like Jezebel's carcase of which no more was left but the skull, the feet, and the palms of her hands) nothing of jurisdiction remains, but what is precarious in them, and voluntary in those who submit unto them: that their whole government is at best but a human constitution, and such as is found and adjudged by both houses of parliament, (in which the judgment of the whole kingdom is involved and declared) not only very prejudicial to the civil state, but a great hindrance also to the perfect reformation of religion. Yea, who knoweth it not to be too much an enemy thereunto, and destructive to the power of godliness, and pure administration of the ordinances of Christ? Which moved the well-affected, almost throughout this kingdom, long since to petition this parliament (as hath been desired before, even in the reign of queen Elizabeth, and of king James) for a total abolition of the same. Nor is any man hereby bound

to offer any violence to their persons, but only in his place and calling, to endeavour their extirpation in a lawful way.

And as for those clergymen, who pretend that they (above all others) cannot covenant to extirpate that government, because they have (as they say) taken a solemn oath to obey the bishops, *in licitis et honestis:* they can tell, if they please, that they that have sworn obedience to the laws of the land, are not thereby prohibited from endeavouring by all lawful means the abolition of those laws, when they prove inconvenient or mischievous. And if yet there should any oath be found, into which any ministers or others have entered, not warranted by the laws of God and the land, in this case they must teach themselves and others, that such oaths call for repentance, not pertinacity in them.

If it be pleaded, That this covenant crosseth the oaths of supremacy and allegiance; there can be nothing further from truth; for, this covenant binds all and more strongly engageth them to "preserve and defend the king's majesty's person, and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms."

That scruple, That this is done without the king's consent, will soon be removed, if it be remembered, that the protestation of the fifth of May, before-mentioned, was in the same manner voted and executed by both houses, and after (by order of one house alone) sent abroad to all the kingdom, his majesty not excepting against it, or giving any stop to it, albeit he was resident in person at Whitehall.

Thus Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra x. Neh. ix.) drew all the people into a covenant without any special commission from the Persian monarchs (then their sovereigns) so to do, albeit they were not free subjects, but vassals, and one of them the servant of Artaxerxes, then by conquest king of Judah also.

Nor hath this doctrine or practice been deemed seditious or unwarrantable by the princes, that have sat upon the English throne, but justified and defended by Queen

Elizabeth of blessed memory, with the expense of much treasure and noble blood, in the united provinces of the Netherlands combined not only without, but against the unjust violence of Philip, king of Spain; king James followed her steps, so far as to approve their union, and to enter into a league with them as free states; which is continued by his majesty now reigning, unto this day; who both by his expedition for relief of Rochel in France, and his strict confederacy with the prince of Orange, and the states general, notwithstanding all the importunity of Spain to the contrary, hath set to his seal that all that had been done by his royal ancestors, in maintainance of those who had so engaged and combined themselves, was just and warrantable.

And what had become of the religion, laws, and liberties of our sister nation of Scotland, had they not entered into such a solemn league and covenant at the beginning of the late troubles there? Which course however it was at first, by the popish and prelatic projectors, represented to his majesty, as an offence of the highest nature, justly deserving chastisement by the fury of a puissant army; yet when the matter came afterwards in cool blood to be debated, first by commissioners of both kingdoms, and then in open parliament here, (when all those of either house, who are now engaged at Oxford, were present in parliament, and gave their votes therein) it was found, adjudged and declared by the king in parliament, that our dear brethren of Scotland had done nothing but what became loyal and obedient subjects, and were by act of parliament publicly righted in all the churches of this kingdom, where they had been defamed.

Therefore, however some men, hoodwinked and blinded by the artifices of those Jesuitical engineers, who have long conspired to sacrifice our religion to the idolatry of Rome, our laws, liberties and persons to arbitrary slavery, and our estates to their insatiable avarice, may possibly be deterred and amused with high threats and declarations, flying up

and down on the wings of the royal name and countenance, now captivated and prostituted to serve all their lusts, to proclaim all rebels and traitors who take this covenant; yet, let no faithful English heart be afraid to join with our brethren of all the three kingdoms in this solemn league, as sometimes the men of Israel, although under another king, did with the men of Judah, at the invitation of Hezekiah.

What though those tongues set on fire by hell do rail and threaten? That God who was pleased to clear up the innocency of Mordecai and the Jews, against all the malicious aspersions of wicked Haman to his and their sovereign, so as all his plotting produced but this effect, that (Esther ix.) "When the king's commandments and decree drew near to be put in execution, and the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, it was turned to the contrary, and the Jews had rule over them that hated them, and laid hands on such as sought their hurt, so as no man could withstand them;" and that same God, who, but even as yesterday vouchsafed to disperse and scatter those dark clouds and fogs, which overshadowed that loyal and religious kingdom of Scotland, and to make their righteousness to shine as clear as the sun at noon-day, in the very eyes of their greatest enemies, will doubtlessly stand by all those who, with singleness of heart, and a due sense of their own sins, and a necessity of reformation, shall now enter into an everlasting covenant with the Lord, never to be forgotten, to put an end to all those unhappy and unnatural breaches between the king and such as are faithful in the land; causing their "righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations," to the terror and confusion of those men of blood, the confederate enemies of God and the king, who have long combined, and have now raked together the dregs and scum of many kingdoms, to bury all the glory, honour and liberty of this nation in the eternal grave of dishonour and destruction.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

SERMON AT LONDON.

*BY EDMOND CALAMY.**

"Truce-breakers (or covenant-breakers)."—2 *Tim.* iii. 3.

IN the beginning of the chapter, the apostle tells us the condition that the church of God should be in, in the last days. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." In the second verse, he tells us the reason why these times should be such hard and dangerous times; "for men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous," &c. The reason is not drawn from the miseries and calamities of the last times, but from the sins and iniquities of the last times. It is sin and iniquity that make times truly perilous. Sin, and sin only, takes away God's love and favour from a nation, and makes God turn an enemy to it. Sin causeth God to take away the purity and power of His ordinances from a nation. Sin makes all the creatures to be armed against us, and makes our own consciences to fight against us. Sin is the cause of all the causes of perilous times. Sin is the cause of our civil wars.

* This Sermon was delivered by Rev. Edmond Calamy, a member of the Westminster Assembly, on January 14, 1645, "before the then Lord Mayor of the City of London, Sir Thomas Adams; together with the Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Common Council of the said City, being the day of their taking the Solemn League and Covenant, at Michael Basenshaw, London."

Sin is the cause of our divisions. Sin is the cause why men fall into such dangerous errors. Sin brings such kinds of judgments, which no other thing can bring. Sin brings invisible, spiritual, and eternal judgments. It is sin that makes God give over a nation to a reprobate sense. Sin makes all times dangerous. Let the times be never so prosperous, yet if they be sinful times, they are times truly dangerous. And if they be not sinful, they are not dangerous, though never so miserable. It is sin that makes afflictions to be the fruits of God's avenging wrath, part of the curse due to sin, and a beginning of hell. It is sin, and sin only, that embitters every affliction. Let us for ever look upon sin through these scripture spectacles.

The apostle, in four verses, reckons up nineteen sins, as the causes of the miseries of the last days. I may truly call these nineteen sins, England's looking-glass, wherein we may see what are the clouds that eclipse God's countenance from shining upon us; the mountains that lie in the way to hinder the settlement of church-discipline: even these nineteen sins, which are as an iron-whip of nineteen strings, with which God is whipping England at this day; which are as nineteen faggots, with which God is burning and devouring England. My purpose is not to speak of all these sins; only let me propound a divine project, how to make the times happy for soul and body. And that is to strike at the root of all misery, which is sin and iniquity: to repent for and from all these nineteen sins, which are as the oil that feeds and increases the flame that is now consuming of us. For, because men are lovers of themselves, *usque ad contemptum Dei et republicæ;* because men drive their own designs, not only to the neglect, but contempt of God and the commonwealth. Because men are covetous, lovers of the world, more than lovers of God. Because they are proud in head, heart, looks and apparel. Because they are unthankful, turning the mercies

of God into instruments of sin, and making darts with God's blessings to shoot against God. Because men are unholy and heady, and make many covenants, and keep none. Because they are (as the Greek word *diaboloi* signifieth) devils, acting the devil's part, in accusing the brethren, and in bearing false witness one against another. Because they have a "form of godliness, denying the power thereof." Hence it is that these times are so sad and bloody. These are thy enemies, O England, that have brought thee into this desolate condition! If ever God lead us back into the wilderness, it will be because of these sins. And therefore, if ever ye would have blessed days, you must make it your great business to remove these nineteen mountains, and repent of these land-devouring and soul-destroying abominations.

At this time, I shall pick out the first and tenth sin to speak on. The first is, *Self-love;* which is placed in the forefront, as the cause of all the rest. Self-love is not only a sin that makes the times perilous, but it is the cause of all these sins that make the times perilous; for, because men are lovers of themselves, therefore they are covetous, proud, unholy. The tenth sin is, *Truce-breakers*, and, for fear lest the time should prevent me, I shall begin with this sin first.

The tenth sin then is truce-breakers; or, as Rom. i. 31., "Covenant-breakers." The Greek word is *aspondoi*, which signifieth three things; *First*, Such as are *fœderis nescii*, as Beza renders it; or, as others, *infœderabilis;* that is, such as refuse to enter into covenant. Or, *Secondly*, Such as are *fœdifragi*, *qui pacta non servant*, as Estius hath it, or *sine fide*, as Ambrose; that is, such as break faith and covenant. Or, *Thirdly*, Such as are *implacabilis;* or, as others, *sine pace*; that is, such as are implacable, and haters of peace. According to this threefold sense of the word, I shall gather these three observations.

Doctrine 1. That to be a covenant-refuser is a sin that makes the times perilous.

Doct. 2. That to be a covenant-breaker is a sin that makes the times perilous.

Doct 3. That to be a peace-hater, or a truce-hater, is a sin that makes the times perilous.

Doct. 1. That to be a covenant refuser is a sin that makes the times perilous; to be *fœderis nescius*, or *infœderabilis*. For the understanding of this, you must know that there are two sorts of covenants, there are devilish and hellish covenants, and there are godly and religious covenants. First, There are devilish covenants, such as Acts xxiii. 12, and Isa. xxviii. 15, such as the holy league, as it was unjustly called in France, against the Huguenots, and that of our gun-powder traitors in England. Now, to refuse to make such covenants is not to make the times perilous, but the taking of them makes the times perilous. Secondly, There are godly covenants, as Psal. cxix. 106, and as 2 Chron. xv. 14: and such as this is which you are met to take this day. For you are to swear to such things which you are bound to endeavour after, though you did not swear. Your swearing is not *solum vinculum*, but *novum vinculum*, is not the only, but only a new and another bond to tie you to the obedience of the things you swear unto; which are so excellent and so glorious, that if God gave those that take it a heart to keep it, it will make these three kingdoms the glory of the world. And as one of the reverend commissioners of Scotland said, when it was first taken in a most solemn manner at Westminister, by the parliament and the assembly, "That if the pope should have this covenant written upon a wall over against him sitting in his chair, it would be unto him like the hand-writing to Belshazzar, causing his joints to loose, and his knees to smite one against another." And I may add, that if it be faithfully and fully kept, it will make all

the devils in hell to tremble, as fearing lest their kingdom should not stand long. Now then, for a man to be an anti-covenanter, and to be such a covenant-refuser, it must needs be a sin that makes the times perilous.

And the reasons are, 1. Because you shall find in scripture, That when any nation did enter into a solemn religious covenant, God did exceedingly bless and prosper that nation after that time, as "That thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, that He may establish thee to-day for a people to Himself, and that He may be unto thee a God." And therefore to be a covenant-refuser, is to make our miseries perpetual. 2. Because it is the highest act of God's love to man, to vouchsafe to engage Himself by oath and covenant to be his God; so it is the highest demonstration of man's love to God, to bind himself by oath and covenant to be God's. There is nothing obligeth God more to us, than to see us willing to tie and bind ourselves unto His service: and therefore, they that in this sense are anti-covenanters are sons of Belial, that refuse the yoke of the Lord, that say, "Let us break His bands asunder, and cast away His cords, from us:" such as *oderunt vincula pietatis*, which is a soul-destroying, and a land-destroying sin. 3. Because that the union of England, Scotland and Ireland, into one covenant, is the chief, if not the only preservative of them at this time. You find in our English chronicles, that England was never destroyed, but when divided within itself. Our civil divisions brought in the Romans, the Saxons, Danes and Normans; but now the anti-covenanters divide the parliament within itself, and the city within itself, and England against itself; they are as stones separated from the building, which are of no use to itself, and threaten the ruin of the building. Jesus Christ is called in Scripture, the "Corner-stone," which is a stone that unites the two ends of the building together. Jesus Christ is a stone of

union: and therefore they that sow division, and study unjust separation, have little of Jesus Christ in them. When the ten tribes began to divide from the other two tribes, they presently began to war one against another, and to ruin one another: the anti-covenanter, he divides and separates and disunites. And therefore he makes perilous times.

My chief aim is at the second doctrine,

Doctrine 2. That for a covenant-taker to be a covenant-breaker, is a sin that makes the times perilous. For the opening of this point, I must distinguish again of covenants. There are civil, and there are religious covenants; a civil covenant is a covenant between man and man; and of this the text is primarily, though not only, to be understood. Now, for a man to break promise and covenant with his brother, is a land-destroying, and a soul-destroying abomination. We read, 2 Sam. xxi., that because Saul had broken the covenant that Joshua made with the Gibeonites, God sent a famine in David's time, of three years' continuance, to teach us that, if we falsify our word and oath, God will avenge covenant-breaking, though it be forty years after. Famous is that text in Jeremiah. Because the princes and the people brake the covenant which they had made with their servants, though but their servants, God tells them, "Because ye have not hearkened unto Me, in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother. . . . Behold, I proclaim liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine: and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth." We read also, that God tells Zedekiah, because he brake the covenant he had made with the king of Babylon, that therefore, "He would recompense upon his head the oath that he had despised, and the covenant that he had broken, and would bring him to Babylon, and plead with him there for the trespass which he had trespassed against the Lord." David tells us, that it is a sin that shuts a man out of heaven. The Turkish history

tells us of a covenant made between Amurath, that great Turk, and Ladislaus, king of Hungary, and how the pope absolved Ladislaus from the oath, and provoked him to renew the war: in which war the Turk, being put to the worst, and despairing of victory, pulls out a paper which he had in his bosom, wherein the league was written, and said, "O Thou God of the Christians, if Thou beest a true God, be avenged of those that have, without cause, broken the league made by calling upon Thy name." And the story says, that after he had spoken these words, he had, as it were, "a new heart, and spirit put into him and his soldiers," and that they obtained a glorious victory over Ladislaus. Thus God avenged the quarrel of man's covenant. The like story we read of Rudolphus, duke of Sweden, who, by the pope's instigation, waged war with Henry IV., emperor of Germany, to whom he had sworn to the contrary. But, in the fight it chanced that Rudolphus lost his right hand, and falling sick upon it, he called for it and said, "Behold this right hand with which I subscribed to the emperor, with which I have violated my oath, and therefore I am rightly punished." I will not trouble you with relating that gallant story of Regulus, that chose rather to expose himself to a cruel death, than to falsify his oath to the Carthaginians. The sum of all is, if it be such a crying abomination to break covenant between man and man; and if such persons are accounted as the off-scouring of men, not worthy to live in a Christian, no, not in a heathen common-wealth: if it be a sin that draws down vengeance from heaven; much more for a man to enter into covenant with the great Jehovah, and to break such a religious engagement: this must needs be a destroying and soul-damning sin. And of such religious covenants I am now to speak.

There are two covenants that God made with man, a covenant of nature, and a covenant of grace. The covenant of nature, or of works, was made with Adam, and all man-

kind in him. This covenant Adam broke, and God presently had a quarrel against him for breaking of it. And, to avenge the quarrel of the covenant, he was thrust out of paradise, and there was a sword also placed at the east end of the garden of Eden, to avenge covenant-breaking. And by nature we are all children of wrath, heirs of hell, because of the breach of that covenant. And therefore we should never think of original sin, or of the sinfulness and cursedness of our natural condition, but we should remember what a grievous sin covenant-breaking is.

But, after man was fallen, God was pleased to strike a new covenant, which is usually called a covenant of grace, or of reconciliation. This was first propounded to Adam by way of promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." And then to Abraham by way of covenant, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the world be blessed." And then to Moses by way of testament. It is nothing else but the free and gracious tender of Jesus Christ, and all His rich purchases to all the lost and undone sons of Adam, that shall believe in Him: or as the phrase is, "That shall take hold of the covenant." Now you must know that baptism is a seal of this covenant, and that all that are baptised do, sacramentally at least, engage themselves to walk before God, and to be upright; and God likewise engages Himself to be their God. This covenant is likewise renewed when we come to the Lord's Supper, wherein we bind ourselves, by a sacramental oath, unto thankfulness to God for Christ. Add further, that besides this general covenant of grace, whereof the sacraments are seals, there are particular and personal, and family and national covenants. Thus, Job had his covenant; and David. And when he came to be king, he joined in covenant with his people to serve the Lord. Thus Asa, Jehoiada, Josiah, and others. Thus the people of Israel had not only a covenant in circumcision, but renewed a covenant at Horeb and Moab,

and did often again and again bind themselves to God by vow and covenant. And thus the churches of Christ. Christians, besides the vows in baptism, have many personal and national engagements unto God by covenant, which are nothing else but the renovations and particular applications of that first vow in baptism. Of this nature is that you are to renew this day.

Now give me leave to shew you what a sword-procuring and soul-undoing sin, this sin of covenant-breaking is; and then the reason of it. Famous is that text, "And I will send My sword, which shall avenge the quarrel of My covenant." The words in the Hebrew run thus, "I will avenge the avengement," which importeth this much, that God is at open war and at public defiance with those that break His covenant: He is not only angry with them, but He will be revenged of them. "The Lord hath a controversy with all covenant-breakers." "The Lord will walk contrary to them." First, God takes His people into covenant, and then He tells them of the happy condition they should be in, if they did keep the covenant; but if they did break covenant, He tells them, "that the Lord will not spare him; but the anger of the Lord and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven, and the Lord shall separate him. And when the nation shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto the land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then shall men say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers.' This was the sin that caused God to send His people Israel into captivity, and to remove the candlestick from the Asian churches. It is for this sin, that the sword is now devouring Germany, Ireland, and England. God hath sent His sword to avenge the quarrel of His covenant.

The reasons why this sin is a God-provoking sin, are,

First, because that, to sin against the covenant is a greater sin than to sin against a commandment of God, or to sin against a promise, or to sin against an ordinance of God. 1. It is a greater sin than to break a commandment of God; for the more mercy there is in the thing we sin against, the greater is the sin. Now there is more mercy in a covenant than in a bare commandment. The commandment tells us our duty, but gives no power to do it. But the covenant of grace, gives power to do what it requires to be done. And therefore, if it be a hell-procuring sin to break the least of God's commandments, much more to be a covenant-breaker. 2. It is a greater sin than to sin against a promise of God; because a covenant is a promise joined with an oath. It is a mutual stipulation between God and us: and therefore, if it be a great sin to break promise, much more to break covenant. 3. It is a greater sin than to sin against an ordinance, because the covenant is the root and ground of all the ordinances. It is by virtue of the covenant that we are made partakers of the ordinances: the word is the book of the covenant, and the sacraments are the seals of the covenant. And if it be a sin of an high nature to sin against the book of the covenant, and the seals of the covenant, much more against the covenant itself. To break covenant, is a fundamental sin; it razeth the very foundation of Christianity, because the covenant is the foundation of all the privileges, and prerogatives, and hopes of the saints of God: and therefore we read that a stranger from the covenant is one "without hope." All hope of heaven is cut off, where the covenant is willingly broken. To break covenant is an universal sin, it includes all other sins. By virtue of the covenant, we tie ourselves to the obedience of God's commandments, we give up ourselves to the guidance of Jesus Christ, we own Him for our Lord and King; all the promises of this life, and that which is to come, are contained within the covenant. The ordinances are fruits

of the covenant: and therefore they that forsake the covenant, commit many sins in one, and bring not only many but all curses upon their heads. The sum of the first argument is, "If the Lord will avenge the quarrel of his commandments," if God was avenged upon the stick-gatherer for breaking the Sabbath, much more will he be avenged upon a covenant-breaker. If God will avenge the quarrel of an ordinance; if they that reject the ordinances shall be punished, "of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, that trample under their feet the blood of the covenant?" If God was avenged of those that abused the ark of the covenant, much more will He punish those that abuse the Angel of the covenant.

The Second reason why covenant-breaking is such a land destroying sin is, because it is a solemn and serious thing to enter into covenant with God: a matter of such great weight and importance, that it is impossible but God should be exceedingly provoked with these that slight it, and disrespect it. The vow in baptism is the first, the most general, and the solemnest that any Christian took, saith Chrysostom: wherein he doth not only promise, but engage himself by covenant in the sight of God, and His holy angels, to be the servant of Jesus Christ; and therefore God will not hold him guiltless, that breaks this vow. The solemnity and weightiness of covenant-taking consisteth in three things. 1. Because it is made with the glorious majesty of heaven and earth, who will not be trifled and baffled withal; and therefore, what Jehoshaphat said to his judges, "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for men, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you," the like I may say to every one that enters into covenant this day; "Take heed what ye do; for it is the Lord's covenant, and there is no iniquity with the Lord: wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you; for our God is a holy God, He is

a jealous God, He will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins." 2. Because the articles of the covenant are weighty, and of great importance. In the covenant of grace, God engageth Himself to give Christ, and with Him all temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings, and we engage ourselves to be His faithful servants all our days. In this covenant, we oblige ourselves to do great matters, that nearly concern the glory of God, the good of our souls, and the happiness of the three kingdoms. And in such holy and heavenly things, which so nearly concern our everlasting estate, to dally and trifle must needs incense the anger of the great Jehovah. 3. The manner used both by Jews, heathens and Christians in entering into covenant, doth clearly set out the weightiness of it, and what a horrible sin it is to break it. The custom among the Jews, will appear by divers texts of scripture. It is said, "And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof." The words they used when they passed between the parts, were "So God divide me, if I keep not covenant." Nehemiah took an oath of the priests, and shook his lap, and said, "So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise; even thus be he shaken out and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen." Abraham divided the heifer, and she-goat, and a ram. "And when the sun was down, a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp, passed between these pieces." This did represent God's presence, saith Clemens Alexandrinus, and as if God should say, "Behold, this day I enter into covenant with thee, and if thou keepest covenant, I will be as a burning lamp to enlighten, and to comfort thee: but if thou breakest covenant, I will be like a smoking furnace to consume thee." Thus also Moses makes a covenant with Israel, and offers sacrifices, and takes

the blood of the sacrifices and divides it, and half of it he sprinkles upon the altar, (which represents God's part) and the other half he sprinkles upon the people, as if he should say, "As this blood is divided, so will God divide you, if ye break covenant." This was the custom among the Jews, amongst the Romans. Sometimes they make covenants by taking a stone in their hands, and saying, "If I make this covenant seriously and faithfully, then let the great Jupiter bless me; if not so, let me be cast away from the face of the gods, as I cast away this stone." This was called *jurare per Jovem lapidem.* All these things are not empty notions and metaphorical shadows, but real and substantial practices; signifying unto us, that God will and must (for it stands with His honour to do it) divide and break them in pieces that break covenant with Him. This day you are to take a covenant by the lifting up of your hands unto the most high God, which is a most emphatical ceremony, whereby we do as it were call God to be a witness and a judge of what we do, and a rewarder or revenger, according as we keep or break this covenant. If we keep it, the lifting up of our hands will be as an evening sacrifice; if we break it, the lifting up our hands will be as the lifting up of the hands of a malefactor at the bar, and will procure woe and misery, and wringing of hands at the great day of appearing.

The Third reason why God will be avenged of those that are covenant-breakers, is: Because that a covenant is the greatest obligation and the most forcible claim that can be invented to tie us to obedience and service. God may justly challenge obedience without covenanting, by virtue of creation, preservation and redemption: He hath made us, and, when lost, He hath purchased us with His blood. But being willing more abundantly to manifest His love, that we be the more fastened to Him, He hath tied Himself to us, and us to Him, by the strong bond of a covenant: as if

God should say, Oh ye sons of men! I see you are rebellious and sons of Belial, and therefore, if it be possible, I will make sure. I will engage you unto Me, not only by creation, preservation and redemption, but also by the right of covenant and association. I will make you Mine by promise and oath. And surely he that will break these bonds is as bad as the man possessed with the devil in the gospel, whom no chains could keep fast. When we enter into covenant with God, we take the oath of supremacy, and swear unto Him, that He should be our chief lord and governor, and that we will admit of no sovereign power or jurisdiction, but that God shall be all in all. We likewise take the oath of allegiance, to be His servants and vassals, and that He shall be our supreme in spirituals and temporals. Now, for a Christian that believes there is a God, to break both these oaths of allegiance and supremacy, it is cursed treason against the God of heaven, which surely God will be avenged of. Amongst the Romans, when any soldier was pressed, he took an oath to serve the captain faithfully, and not to forsake him, and he was called *miles per sacramentum*. Sometimes one took an oath for all the rest, and the others only said, the same oath that A. B. took, the same do I. And these were called *milites per conjurationem*. And when any soldier forsook his captain, he had the martial law executed upon him. Thus it is with every Christian: he is a professed soldier of Christ, he hath taken press-money, he hath sworn and taken the sacrament upon it to become the Lord's, he is *miles per sacramentum*, and *miles per conjurationem:* and if he forsake his captain and break covenant, the great Lord of Hosts will be avenged of him, as it is written, "Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of the covenant." To break covenant is a sin of perjury, which is a sin of an high nature; and if for oaths the land mourneth, much more for breach of oaths. To break covenant is a sin of spiritual adultery; for by

covenanting with God, we do as it were, "join ourselves in marriage to God," as the Hebrew word signifieth. Now, to break the marriage knot is a sin for which God may justly give a bill of divorce to a nation. To break covenant is a sin of injustice; for by our covenant we do enter, as it were, into bond to God, and engage ourselves as a creditor to his debtor; now the sin of injustice is a land-destroying sin.

The Fourth reason why God must needs be avenged on those that are covenant-breakers, is, It is an act of the highest sacrilege that can be committed. For, by virtue of the covenant, the Lord lays claim to us as His peculiar inheritance. "I sware unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becamest Mine." "I will be their God, and they shall be My people." It is a worthy observation, that in the covenant there is a double surrender, one on God's part, and another on our part. God Almighty makes a surrender of Himself, and of his Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Behold, saith God, I am wholly thy God; all My power, and mercy, and goodness, all is thine; My Son is thine, and all His rich purchases; My Spirit is thine, and all His graces: this is God's surrender. On our part, when we take hold of the covenant, we make a delivery of our bodies and souls into the hands of God; we choose Him to be our Lord and Governor, we resign up ourselves into His hands. Lord, we are Thine at Thy disposing: we alienate ourselves, and make a deed of gift of ourselves, and give Thee lock and key of head, heart, and affections. This is the nature of every religious covenant, but especially of the covenant of grace. But now, for a Christian to call in, as it were, his surrender, to disclaim his resignation, to steal away himself from God, and lay claim to himself after his alienation; to fulfil his own lusts, to walk after his own ways, to do what he lists, and not what he hath covenanted to do, and so to rob God of what is His: this is the highest

degree of sacrilege, which God will never suffer to go unpunished. And surely if the stick-gatherer, that did but alienate a little of God's time; and Ananias and Sapphira, that withheld but some part of their estate: and if Belshazzar for abusing the consecrated vessels of the temple, were so grievously punished; how much more will God punish those that alienate themselves from the service of that God to whom they have sworn to be obedient? It is observed by a learned author, of the famous commanders of the Romans, that they never prospered after they had defiled and robbed the temple of Jerusalem. First, Pompey the Great, went into the *sanctum sanctorum*, a place never before entered by any but the high-priest, and the Lord blasted him in all his proceedings, "that he that before that time wanted earth to overcome, had not at last earth enough to bury him withal." The next was Crassus, who took away 10,000 talents of gold from the temple, and afterward died, by having gold poured down his throat. The third was Cassius, who afterwards killed himself. If then God did thus avenge Himself of those that polluted His consecrated temple; much more will He not leave them unpunished, that are the living temples of the Holy Ghost, consecrated to God by covenant, and afterwards proving sacrilegious, robbing God of that worship and service, which they have sworn to give Him.

The Fifth reason why this sin makes the times perilous, is; Because covenant-breakers are reckoned amongst the number of those that have the mark of reprobation upon them. I do not say that they are all reprobates, yet I say, that the apostle makes it to be one of those sins which are committed by those that are given up "to a reprobate mind." The words are spoken of the heathen, and are to be understood of covenants made between man and man; and then the argument will hold *a fortiori*. If it be the brand of a reprobate to break covenant with man, much

more a covenant made with the great Jehovah by the lifting up of our hands to heaven.

The Last reason is, because it is a sin against such infinite mercy. It is said, "Which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them;" that is, although I had chosen them for my spouse, and married myself unto them with an everlasting covenant of mercy, and entailed heaven unto them, yet they have broken my covenant. This was a great provocation. Thus, "When thou wast in thy blood, and no eye pitied thee, to have compassion upon thee, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live: Yea, I said unto thee, Live." It is twice repeated. As if God should say, "Mark it, O Israel, when no eye regarded thee, then I said unto thee, Live." Behold, saith God, "Thy time was the time of love." Behold, and wonder at it. "And I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord, and thou becamest Mine." And yet for all this, thou has sinned grievously against Me. "Wo, wo unto thee, saith the Lord God."

There is a fivefold mercy in the covenant, especially in the covenant of grace, that makes the sin of covenant-breaking to be so odious.

1. It is a mercy that the great God will vouchsafe to enter into covenant with dust and ashes. As David saith in another case, "Is it a light thing to be the son-in-law of a king?" So may I say, "Is it a light matter for the Lord of heaven and earth to condescend so far as to covenant with His poor creatures, and thereby to become their debtors, and to make them, as it were, His equals?" When Jonathan and David entered into a covenant of friendship, though one was a king's son, the other a poor shepherd, yet there was a kind of equality between them. But this must be understood warily, according to the text. "Blessed be God, who hath called us unto the fellowship

of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." He is still our Lord, though in fellowship with us. It is a covenant of infinite condescension on God's part, whereby He enters into a league of friendship with His people.

2. The mercy is the greater, because this covenant was made after the fall of Adam. After we had broken the first covenant, that the Lord should try us the second time, is not only an act of infinite goodness of God, but of infinite mercy. There is a difference between the goodness and the mercy of God. Goodness may be shewed to those that are not in misery: but mercy supposeth misery. And this was our condition after the breach of the first covenant.

3. That God should make this covenant with man, and not with devils.

4. This sets out the mercy of the covenant, because it contains such rare and glorious benefits, and therefore it is called a covenant of life and peace. "An everlasting covenant even the sure mercies of David." It is compared to the waters of Noah, Isa. liv. 6. Famous are those two texts; Exod. xix. 5, 6; Jer. xxxii. 40, 41—texts that hold forth strong consolation. By virtue of the covenant, heaven is not only made possible, but certain to all believers, and certain by way of oath. It is by virtue of the covenant that we call Him Father, and may lay claim to all the power, wisdom, goodness and mercy, that are in God. As Jehoshaphat told the king of Israel, to whom he was joined in covenant, "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses:" so doth God say to all that are in covenant with Him, "My power is thine, My holiness is thine." By virtue of this covenant, whatsoever thou wantest, God cannot deny it thee, if it be good for thee. Say unto God, Lord, Thou hast sworn to take away my heart of stone, and to give me a heart of flesh, Thou hast sworn to write Thy law in my heart, Thou hast sworn to circumcise my heart, Thou hast sworn to give me Christ, to be my king,

priest and prophet. And God cannot but be a covenant-keeper. By virtue of this covenant, God cannot but accept of a poor penitent sinner, laying hold upon Christ for pardon. In a word, we may challenge pardon and heaven by our covenant. God is not only merciful but just to forgive us: we may challenge heaven through Christ, out of justice. And

5. That the condition of the covenant on our part should be upon such easy terms, therefore it is called a covenant of free grace, and all that God requires of us is to take hold of this covenant; to receive this gift of righteousness; to take all Christ, as He is tendered in the covenant; and, that which is the greatest consolation of all, God hath promised in His covenant to do our part for us. Therefore it is called a testament, rather than a covenant. In the New Testament, the word *diatheke*, is always used by the apostle, and not *syntheke*. Heaven is conveyed into the elect by way of legacy. It is part of God's testament, to write His law in our hearts, and to cause us to walk in His ways. Put these together, seeing there is such infinite mercy in the covenant. A mercy, for God to enter into covenant with us, to do it with us, and not the angels; with us fallen, with us upon such easy terms, and to make such a covenant that contains so many, and not only so but all blessings here and hereafter, in the womb of it. It must needs be a land-destroying, and soul-destroying sin, to be a covenant-breaker.

The use and application of this doctrine is fourfold. 1. Of information. If it be such a land-destroying sin to be a covenant-breaker, let us from hence learn the true cause of all the miseries that have happened unto England in these late years. The womb out of which all our calamities are come—England hath broken covenant with God, and now God is breaking England in pieces, even as a potter breaks a vessel in pieces. "God hath sent His sword to avenge the quarrel of His covenant," as Christ whipped the buyers and sellers out of the temple, with whips

made of the cords which they had brought to tie their oxen and sheep withal. A covenant is a cord to tie us to God: and now God hath made an iron whip of that covenant which we have broken asunder, to whip us withal.

We are a nation in covenant with God, we have the books of the covenant, the Old and New Testament; we have the seals of the covenant, baptism, and the Lord's supper; we have the messengers of the covenant, the ministers of the Gospel; we have the angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ, fully, freely, and clearly set out before us in the ministry of the word: but alas! are not these blessings amongst us, as the ark was amongst the Philistines, rather as prisoners, than as privileges, rather *in testimonium et ruinam, quam in salutem;* rather for our ruin, than for our happiness? May it not be said of us, as reverend Mulin said of the French protestants, "While they burned us (saith he) for reading the scriptures, we burned with zeal to be reading of them; now with our liberty is bred also negligence and disesteem of God's word." So is it with us, while we were under the tyranny of bishops; Oh! how sweet was a fasting day? How beautiful were the feet of them that brought the gospel of peace unto you? How dear and precious were God's people one to another? But now, how are our fasting days slighted and vilified? How are the people of God divided one from another, railing upon (instead of loving) one another? And is not the godly ministry as much persecuted by the tongues of some that would be accounted godly, as heretofore by the bishop's hands? Is not the Holy Bible by some rather wrested than read? Wrested, I say, by ignorant and unstable souls, to their own destruction? And as for the seals of the covenant, 1. For the Lord's supper, how oft have we spilt the blood of Christ by our unworthy approaches to His table? And hence it is, that He is now spilling our blood; how hard a matter is it, to obtain power to keep the blood

of Christ from being profaned by ignorant and scandalous communicants? And can we think, that God will be easily entreated to sheath up His bloody sword, and to cease shedding our blood? 2. For the sacrament of baptism; how cruel are men grown to their little infants, by keeping of them from the seal of entrance into the kingdom of heaven, and making their children to be just in the same condition with the children of Turks and Infidels? I remember, at the beginning of these wars there was a great fear fell upon godly people about their little children, and all their care was for their preservation and their safety; and for the continuance of the gospel to them. But now, our little children are likely to be in a worse condition than ever. And all this is come upon us as a just punishment of our baptismal covenant-breaking. And as for Jesus Christ, who is the angel of the covenant: are there not some amongst us that ungod Jesus Christ? And is it not fit and equal that God should unchurch us and unpeople us? Are there not thousands that have sworn to be Christ's servants, and yet are in their lives the vassals of sin and Satan? And shall not God be avenged of such a nation as this? These things considered, it is no wonder our miseries are so great, but the wonder is that they are not greater.

2. An use of examination. Days of humiliation ought to be days of self-examination. Let us therefore upon such a day as this, examine, whether we be not amongst the number of those that make the times perilous, whether we be not covenant-breakers? Here I will speak of three covenants; 1. Of the covenant we have made with God in our baptism. 2. Of the covenant we have made with God in our distresses. 3. And especially of this covenant you are to renew this day.

1. Of the covenant which we made in baptism, and renew every time we come to the Lord's supper, and upon our solemn days of fasting. There are none here, but I may

say of them, "the vows of God are upon you." You are *servi nati, empti, jurati*, you are the born, bought, and sworn servants of God, you have made a surrender of yourselves unto God and Christ. The question I put to you is this: How often have you broken covenant with God? It is said, "The sinners in Zion are afraid; who shall dwell with everlasting torments? Who shall dwell with devouring fire?" When God comes to a church-sinner, to a sinner under the Old Testament, much more to a Christian sinner, a sinner under the New Testament, and layeth to his charge his often covenant-breaking, fearfulness shall possess him, and he will cry out, "Oh! woe is me, who can dwell with everlasting burnings? Our God is a consuming fire, and we are as stubble before Him; who can stand before His indignation? Who can abide in the fierceness of His anger? When His fury is poured forth like fire, and the rocks are thrown down before Him. Who can stand?" Of all sorts of creatures, a sinful Christian shall not be able to stand before the Lord, when He comes to visit the world for their sins. For when a Christian sins against God, he sins not only against the commandment but against the covenant. And in every sin he is a commandment-breaker, and a covenant-breaker. And therefore, whereas the apostle saith, "tribulation and anguish upon every soul that sinneth: but first upon the Jews," I may add, first, upon the Christian, then upon the Jew, and then upon the Grecian, because the covenant made with the Christian is called a better covenant: and therefore his sins have a higher aggravation in them. There is a notable passage in Austin, in which he brings in the devil thus pleading with God, against a wicked Christian at the day of judgment. Oh! Thou righteous Judge, give righteous judgment; judge him to be mine who refused to be Thine, even after he had renounced me in his baptism; what had he to do to wear my livery? What had he to do with

gluttony, drunkenness, pride, wantonness, incontinency, and the rest of my ware? All these things he hath practised, since he renounced the devil and all his works. Mine he is, judge righteous judgment; for he whom Thou hast not disdained to die for, hath obliged himself to me by his sins.

Now, what can God say to this charge of the devil's, but take him, devil, seeing he would be thine; take him, torment him with everlasting torments. Cyprian brings in the devil thus speaking to Christ in the great day of judgment. I have not (saith the devil) been whipped, and scourged, and crucified, neither have I shed my blood for those whom Thou seest with me; I do not promise them a kingdom of heaven, and yet these men have wholly consecrated themselves to me and my service. Indeed, if the devil could make such gainful covenants with us, and bestow such glorious mercies upon us as are contained within the covenant, our serving of Satan and sin might have some excuse. But, whereas his covenant is a covenant of bondage, death, hell, and damnation; and God's covenant is a covenant of liberty, grace, and eternal happiness, it must needs be a sin inexcusable to be willingly and wilfully such a covenant-breaker.

2. Let us examine concerning the vows which we have made to God in our distresses; in our personal distresses, and our national distresses. Are we not like the children of Israel, of whom it is said, "When He slew them, then they sought Him, and they returned and inquired early after God. Nevertheless they did flatter Him with their mouth. For their heart was not right with Him, neither were they stedfast in His covenant." Are we not like little children that, while they are being whipped, will promise any thing; but, when the whipping is over, will perform nothing? Or like unto iron that is very soft and malleable while it is in the fire, but, when it is taken out of the fire, returns presently to its former hardness? This was Jacob's fault: he made a

vow when he was in distress, but he forgot his covenant, and God was angry with him, and chastised him in his daughter, Dinah, and in his two sons, Simeon and Levi; and at last God Himself was fain to call him from heaven to keep covenant; and after that time God blessed Jacob exceedingly. We read of David, that he professes of himself, "That he would go to God's house, and pay the vows which his lips uttered, and his mouth had spoken, when he was in trouble." But, how few are there that imitate David in this thing.

3. Let us examine ourselves concerning this Solemn League and Covenant which we are to renew this day. And here I demand an answer to this question. Quest. Are we not covenant-breakers? Do we not make the times perilous by our falsifying of our oath and covenant with God? In our covenant we swear to six things.

1. "That we will endeavour to be humbled for our own sins, and for the sins of the kingdom:" But where shall we find a mourner in England for his own abominations, and for the abominations that are committed in the midst of us? It is easy to find a censurer of the sins of the land, but hard to find a true mourner for the sins of the land.

2. We swear "that we will endeavour to go before one another in the example of a real reformation." But who makes conscience of this part of the oath? What sin hast thou left, or in what one thing hast thou reformed since thou didst take this covenant? We read, "That they entered into a covenant to put away their wives and children by them," which was a very difficult and hard duty, and yet they did it. But what bosom-sin, what beloved sin, as dear to thee as thy dear wife and children, hast thou left for God's sake, since thou tookest this oath? I read, That the people took an oath to make restitution, which was a costly duty, and yet they performed it. But alas! where is the man that hath made restitution of his ill-gotten goods since he

took this covenant? I read, that king Asa deposed his mother Maachah, her even, from being queen, after he had entered into covenant: and that the people, after they had sworn a covenant, brake in pieces all the altars of Baal thoroughly. But where is this thorough reformation. We say, we fight for a reformation, but I fear lest in a little time, we fight away our reformation. Or, if we fight it not away, yet we should dispute it away. For all our religion is turned into questions, in so much that there are some that call all religion into question, and in a little while will lose all religion in the crowd of questions. There was a time not many years ago, when God did bless our ministry in the city, to the conversion of many people unto God; but now there are many that study more to gain parties to themselves, than to gain souls to God. The great work of conversion is little thought on, and never so few, if any at all, converted as in these days wherein we talk so much of reformation. And is this to keep covenant with God?

3. We swear "to endeavour to amend our lives, and reform not only ourselves, but also those that are under our charge." But where is that family reformation? Indeed I read of Jacob that when he went to perform his vow and covenant, he first reformed his family. And that Joshua resolved, and performed it, "for himself and his family to serve the Lord." And so did Josiah. And oh! that I could add, And so do we. But the wickedness committed in our families proclaims the contrary to all the world. What noblemen, what aldermen, what merchants, families, are more reformed since the covenant than before? We speak and contend much for a church-reformation, but how can there be a church-reformation, unless there be a family-reformation? What though the church-worship be pure, yet if the worshippers be impure, God will not accept of the worship? And if families be not reformed, how will your worshippers be pure?

4. We swear to endeavour "to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest uniformity in religion confession of faith, form of church government, directory for worship, and catechising." But are there not some that write against an uniformity in religion, and call it an idol? Are there not many that walk professedly contrary to this clause of the covenant? There are three texts of scripture that people keep quite the contrary way. The first is, "Take no thought what ye shall eat; take no thought for to-morrow." And most people take thought for nothing else. The second is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness;" and most people seek this last of all. The third text is, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth for ever;" and most people labour not for the meat that endureth for ever, but for the meat that perisheth. As these three texts are kept, so do many people keep this part of the oath; for there were never more divisions and differences in the church, never more deformity, and pleading against uniformity, than now there is.

5. We swear "to endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, and schism." And yet, notwithstanding, there are some that have taken the oath that contend earnestly for a toleration of all religions.

6. We swear "against a detestable indifferency and neutrality in this cause, which so much concerneth the glory of God." And yet how many are there amongst us like unto Gallio, that care not what becomes of the cause of God, so they may have peace and quiet? That will not be the backwardest of all, and yet will be sure not to be too forward: for fear lest, if the times turn, they should be noted amongst the chief of the faction? That are very indifferent which side prevail, so they may have their trading again? That say as the politicians say, That they would be careful not to come too near the heels of religion, lest it should dash out their brains:

and as the king of Arragon told Beza, That he would wade no further into the sea of religion, than he could safely return to shore. In all these six particulars, let us seriously search and try our hearts, whether we be not among the number of those that make the times perilous.

The third use is for humiliation. Let the consideration of our covenant-breaking be a heart-breaking consideration to every one of us this day: let this be a mighty and powerful argument to humble us upon this day of humiliation. There are five considerations that are exceedingly soul-humbling, if God bless them to us.

1. The consideration of the many commandments of God, that we have often and often broken. 2. The consideration of the breaking of Jesus Christ for our sins, how He was rent and torn for our iniquities. 3. The consideration of the breaking of the bread, and pouring out of the wine in the sacrament, which is a heart-breaking motive and help. 4. The broken condition that the kingdoms of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Germany, are in at this time. 5. The many vows and covenants that we have broken; our sacrament-covenants, our fasting-covenants, our sick-bed covenants; and especially the consideration of our often breaking our national covenant, which you come this day to renew. This is a sin in folio, a sin of a high nature: and if ever God awaken our conscience in this life, a sin that will lie like a heavy *incubus* upon it. A greater sin than to sin against a commandment, or against an ordinance. A sin not only of disobedience, but of perjury; a sin of injustice, of spiritual adultery, a sin of sacrilege, a sin of great unkindness, a sin that not only makes us disobedient, but dishonest; for we account him a dishonest man, that keeps not his word. A sin that not only every good Christian, but every good heathen doth abhor; a sin that not only brings damnation upon us, but casteth such an horrible disgrace and reproach upon God, that it cannot stand with God's honour not to be

avenged of a covenant-breaker. Tertullian saith, "That when a Christian forsakes his covenant, and the colours of Christ, and turns to serve as the devil's soldier, he puts an unspeakable discredit upon God and Christ." For it is as much as if he should say, "I like the service of the devil better than the service of God." And it is just as if a soldier that hath waged war under a captain, and afterwards forsakes him, and turns to another; and after that, leaves this other captain, and turns to his former captain. This is to prefer the first captain before the second. This makes God complain, "What iniquity have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me?" And, "Hath any nation changed their god, which yet are no gods? But My people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit." Basil brings in the devil insulting over Christ, and saying, "I never created nor redeemed these men, and yet they have obeyed me and contemned Thee, O Christ, even after they have covenanted to be Thine." And then he adds, "I esteem this honouring of the devil over Jesus Christ at the great day, to be more grievous to a true saint than all the torments in hell." A saying worthy to be written in letters of gold. Seeing then that covenant-breaking is so great an abomination, the Lord give us hearts to be humbled for this great abomination this day. And this will be a notable preparation to fit you for the renewing of your covenant. For we read, that Nehemiah first called his people to fast before he drew them unto a covenant: according to which pattern, you are here met to pray and humble your souls for your former covenant-breaking; and then to bind yourselves anew unto the Lord our God. As wax, when it is melted, will receive the impression of a seal, which it will not do before: so will your hearts, when melted into godly sorrow for our sins, receive the seal of God abidingly upon them which they will not do when hardened in sin.

Is every man that sins against the covenant to be accounted a covenant-breaker, and a perjured sacrilegious person? By no means. For, as every failing of a wife doth not break covenant between her and her husband, but she is to be accounted a wife, till she, by committing adultery, break the covenant: so, every miscarriage against the covenant of grace, or against this national covenant doth not denominate us, in a gospel account, covenant-breakers: but then God accounts us, according to His gospel, to break covenant when we do not only sin, but commit sin against the covenant; when we do not only sin out of weakness, but out of wickedness; when we do not only fail, but fall into sin; when we forsake and renounce the covenant; when we deal treacherously in the covenant, and enter into league and covenant with those sins which we have sworn against; when we walk into anti-covenant paths, and willingly do contrary to what we swear; then are we perjured, and unjust, and sacrilegious, and guilty of all those things formerly mentioned.

The fourth use presents unto you a divine, and therefore a sure project to make the times happy; and that is, let all covenant-takers labour to be covenant-keepers. It hath pleased God, to put it in your hearts to renew your covenant, the same God enabled you to keep covenant. It is said, "The king made a covenant before the Lord. And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord. And all the people stood to the covenant." This is your duty, not only to take the covenant, but to stand to the covenant; and to stand to it maugre all opposition to the contrary, as we read, "And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers. That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman." For it is not the taking,

but the keeping of the covenant, that will make you happy. God is styled, "A God keeping covenant." O that this might be the honour of this city! That we may say of it, London is a city keeping covenant with God. Great and many are the blessings entailed upon covenant-keepers. "Now, therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me, above all people: for all the earth is Mine; and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant." There are three covenants, I shall persuade you in a special manner to stand to.

1. The covenant you made with God in baptism. A Christian (saith Chrysostom) should never step out of doors, or lie down in his bed, or go into his closet, but he should remember the time when he did renounce the devil and all his works. Oh, let us not forget that which we ought always to remember! Let us remember to keep that covenant, as we ever desire God should remember us in mercy at the great day.

2. The covenant we make with God in our afflictions. Famous is that passage of Pliny in one of his epistles, to one that desired rules from him how to order his life aright; I will (saith he) give you one rule, which shall be instead of a thousand: That we should persevere to be such, when we are well, as we promise to be when we are sick. A sentence never to be forgotten: the Lord help us to live accordingly.

3. The covenant which you are to take this day. The happiness or misery of England doth much depend upon the keeping or breaking of this covenant. If England keep it, England by keeping covenant shall stand sure. If England break it, God will break England in pieces. If England slight it, God will slight England. If England forsake it, God will forsake England, and this shall be written upon the tomb of perishing England, "Here lieth

a nation that hath broken the covenant of their God." Remember what you have heard this day, that it is the brand of a reprobate to be a covenant-breaker, and it is the part of a fool to vow and not to pay his vows. And God hath no delight in the sacrifice of fools. "Better not to vow, than to vow and not to pay." It is such a high profanation of God's name, as that God cannot hold a covenant-breaker guiltless; it is perjury, injustice, spiritual adultery, sacrilege. And the very lifting up of our hands this day, (if you do not set heart and hand on work to keep covenant) will be a sufficient witness against you at the great day. We read "that Jacob and Laban entered in covenant, and took a heap of stones, and they called the place Mizpah, the Lord watch between me and thee," and made them a witness, and said "this heap is a witness." "The God of Abraham judge betwixt us." Such is your condition this day. You enter into covenant to become the Lord's, and to be valiant for His truth, and against His enemies, and the very stones of this church shall be witness against you, if you break covenant; the name of this place may be called Mizpah. The Lord will watch over you for good, if you keep it, and for evil if you break it; and all the curses contained in the book of the covenant shall light upon a willing covenant-breaker. The Lord fasten these meditations and soul-awakening considerations upon your hearts. The Lord give you grace to keep close to the covenant and a good conscience, which are both lost by breaking covenant.

There are four things I shall persuade you unto in pursuance of your covenant. 1. To be humbled for your own sins, and for the sins of the kingdom; and more especially, because we have not, as we ought, valued the inestimable benefit of the gospel, that we have not laboured to receive Christ in our hearts, nor to walk worthy of Him in our lives, which are the causes of other sins and transgressions so much abounding amongst us. Gospel sins

are greater than legal sins, and will bring gospel curses, which are greater than legal curses. And therefore let us be humbled according to our covenant, for all our gospel abominations. 2. You must be ambitious to go before one another in an example of real reformation. You must swear vainly no more, be drunk no more, break the Sabbath no more. You must remember what David says. "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to take My covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee." To sin willingly, after we have sworn not to sin, is not only to sin against a commandment, but to sin against an oath, which is a double iniquity, and will procure a double damnation. And he that takes a covenant to reform, and yet continueth unreformed, his covenant will be unto him as the bitter water of jealousy was to the woman guilty of adultery, which made her belly to swell, and thigh to rot. 3. You must be careful to reform your families, according to your covenant, and the example of Jacob and Joshua, and the godly kings fore-mentioned. 4. You must endeavour, according to your places and callings, to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction, and uniformity in religion. O blessed unity! how comes it to pass, that thou art so much slighted and contemned? Was not unity one of the chief parts of Christ's prayer unto His Father, when He was here upon the earth? Is not unity amongst Christians one of the strongest arguments to persuade the world to believe in Christ? Is it not the chief desire of the holy apostles, that we "should all speak the same things, and that there should be no division amongst us?" Is not unity the happiness of heaven? Is it not the happiness of a city, to be at unity with itself? "Is it not a good and pleasant thing for brethren to dwell together in unity?" How comes it to pass then that this part of the covenant is so much forgotten? The Lord mind you of it this day; and the

Lord make this great and famous city, a city of holiness, and a city of unity within itself: for if unity be destroyed, purity will quickly also be destroyed. The church of God is *Una*, as well as *Sancta*; it is but one church, as well as it is a holy church. And "Jesus Christ gave some to be apostles, etc. till we all come to the unity of the faith." The government of Christ is appointed for keeping the church in unity, as well as purity. These things which God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. That government which doth not promote unity as well as purity, is not the government of Christ. Oh, the misery of the kingdom where church divisions are nourished and fomented! A kingdom or church against itself, cannot stand. Would it not be a sad thing, to see twelve in a family, and one of them a Presbyterian, another an Independent, another a Brownist, another an Antimonian, another an Anabaptist, another a Familist, another for Prelatical government, another a Seeker, another a Papist, and the tenth, it may be, an Atheist, and the eleventh a Jew, and the twelfth a Turk? The Lord in His due time heal our divisions, and make you His choice of instruments, according to your places, that the Lord may be one, and His name one in the three kingdoms.

Quest. But some will say, "How shall I do to get up my heart to this high pitch, that I may be a covenant-keeper?" I will propound these three helps. 1. Labour to be always mindful of your covenant, according to that text, "God is always mindful of His covenant." It was the great sin of the people of Israel, that they were unmindful of the covenant. They first forgot the covenant, and afterwards did quickly forsake it. He that forgets the covenant, must needs be a covenant-breaker. Let us therefore remember it, and carry it about us as *quotidianum argumentum*, and *quotidianum munimentum*. 1. Let us make the covenant a daily argument against all sin and iniquity; and when we

are tempted to any sin, let us say, "I have sworn to forsake my old iniquity, and, if I commit this sin, I am not only a commandment-breaker, but an oath-breaker. I am perjured. I have sworn to reform my family, and therefore I will not suffer a wicked person to tarry in my family; I have sworn against neutrality and indifferency, and therefore I will be zealous in God's cause." 2. Let us make this covenant a daily muniment and armour of defence, to beat back all the fiery darts of the devil: when any one tempts thee by promise of preferment to do contrary to thy covenant, or threatens to ruin thee for the hearty pursuing of thy covenant, here is a ready answer, "I am sworn to do what I do, and, if I do otherwise, I am a perjured wretch." This is a wall of brass, to resist any dart that shall be shot against thee for well-doing, according to thy covenant. Famous is the story of Hannibal, which he told king Antiochus, when he required aid of him against the Romans, "When I was nine years old (saith he) my father carried me to the altar, and made me take an oath to be an irreconcilable foe to the Romans. In pursuance of this oath, I have waged war against them thirty-six years. To keep this oath, I have left my country, and am come to seek aid at your hands, which, if you deny, I will travel all over the world, to find out some enemies to the Roman state." If an oath did so mightily operate in Hannibal; let the oath you are to take this day work as powerfully upon you; and make your oath an argument to oppose personal-sins and family sins, and to oppose heresy, schism, and all profaneness; and to endeavour to bring the church of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity. And let this oath be armour-proof against all temptations to the contrary. And know this one thing, that if the covenant be not a daily argument and muniment against sin, it will become, upon your breaking of it, a daily witness against you, as the book of the law was,

and an "everlasting shame and reproach" unto you and yours. 2. Let us have high thoughts of the covenant. Actions and affections follow our apprehensions. If thy judgment be belepered with a corrupt opinion about the covenant, thy affections and actions will quickly be belepered also: and therefore you ought to endeavour, according to your places, that nothing be spoken or written that may tend to the prejudice of the covenant. 3. You must take heed of the cursed sin of self-love, which is placed in the forefront, as the cause of all the catalogue of sins here named; "Because men are lovers of themselves, therefore they are covetous," etc., and therefore they are covenant-breakers. A self-seeker cannot but be a covenant-breaker: this is a sin you must hate as the very gates of hell.

And this is the second sin I promised in the beginning of my sermon to speak on: but the time, and your other occasions will not permit. There is a natural self-love, and a divine self-love, and a sinful self-love. This sinful self-love is, when we make ourselves the last end of all our actions, when we so love ourselves, as to love no man but ourselves, according to the proverb, "Every man for himself." When we pretend God and His glory, and the common good, but intend ourselves, and our own private gain and interest; when we serve God upon politic designs. Where this sinful self-love dwells, there dwells no love to God, no love to thy brother, no love to church or state. This sinful self-love is the caterpillar that destroyeth church and commonwealth. It is from this sinful self-love that the public affairs drive on so heavily, and that church-government is not settled, and that our covenant is so much neglected. Of this sin, I cannot now speak; but, when God shall offer opportunity, I shall endeavour to uncase it you. In the meantime, the Lord give you grace to hate it as hell itself.

THE NATIONAL COVENANTS.

Fac-simile of old Title page of following Ceremony.

THE FORM and ORDER OF THE CORONATION OF *CHARLES* II.

King of *SCOTLAND, ENGLAND, FRANCE* and *IRELAND.*

As it was acted and done at *SCOON*, the First Day of *January*, 1651.

By the Reverend Mr. ROBERT DOUGLAS, Minister at *Edinburgh*, and one of the Members of the *Westminster* Assembly of *Divines.*

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1 Chron. xxix. 23. *Then* Solomon *sat on the Throne of the Lord as King, in stead of* David *his Father, and prospered, and all* Israel *obeyed him.*

Prov. xx. 8. *A King that sitteth in the Throne of Judgment, scattereth away all Evil with his Eyes.*

Prov. xxv. 5. *Take away the Wicked from before the King, and his Throne shall be established in Righteousness.*

GLASGOW,
Printed for GEORGE PATON, and are to be Sold at his Shop in *Linlithgow*, and other Booksellers in Town and Country. 1741.

THE NATIONAL COVENANTS.

CORONATION SERMON AT SCONE.*

BY ROBERT DOUGLAS.

> And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him; and gave him the testimony, and they made him king and anointed him, and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king.
>
> And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord, and the king, and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also, and the people.—2 *Kings* xi. 12, 17.

In this text of Scripture you have the solemn enthronizing of Joash, a young king, and that in a very troublesome time; for Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, had cruelly murdered the royal seed, and usurped the kingdom by the space of six years. Only this young prince was preserved by Jehosheba, the sister of Ahaziah, and wife to Jehoiada, the high priest, being hid with her in the house of the Lord, all that time.

Good interpreters do conjecture, though Joash be called

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* The coronation of Charles II. took place at Scone, 1st January, 1651. In the "chamber of presence," the nation's representatives invited the King to accept the crown; to which the King replied: "I do esteem the affections of my good people more than the crown of many Kingdoms, and shall be ready, by God's assistance, to bestow my life in their defence, wishing to live no longer than I may see religion and this kingdom flourish in all happiness." Thereafter, they proceeded to the "Kirk of Scoon, in order and rank, and according to their quality." The "King first settles himself in his chair for hearing of sermon. All being quietly composed unto attention, Mr. Robert Douglas, Moderator of the Commission of the General Assembly, after incalling on God by prayer, preached the following sermon." After the Sermon, the king took the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant.

the son of Ahaziah, that he was not his son by nature, but by succession to the crown. They say, that the race of Solomon ceased here, and the kingdom came to the posterity of Nathan, the son of David, because, 'tis said, "the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom;" which they conceive to be for the want of children in that house, and because of the absurdity and unnaturalness of the fact, that Athaliah, the grandmother, should have cut off her son's children. I shall not stand on the matter, only I may say, if they were Ahaziah's own children, it was a most unnatural and cruel act for Athaliah to cut off her own posterity.

For the usurpation, there might have been two motives. *First*, It seemeth when Ahaziah went to battle, Athaliah was left to govern the kingdom, and, her son Ahaziah being slain before his return, she thought the government sweet, and could not part with it, and because the royal seed stood in her way, she cruelly destroyed them, that she might reign with the greater freedom. *Secondly*, She was earnest to set up a false worship, even the worship of Baal, which she thought could not be so well done, as by cutting off the royal race, and getting the sole power in her hand, that she might do what she pleased.

The business you are about this day, is not unlike: you are to invest a young king in the throne, in a very troublesome time, and wicked men have risen up and usurped the kingdom, and put to death the late king most unnaturally. The like motives seemed to have prevailed with them. *First*, These men by falsehood and dissimulation, have gotten power in their hands, which to them is so sweet, that they are unwilling to part with it; and because the king and his seed stood in their way, they have made away the king, and disinherited his children, that the sole power might be in their hand. *Secondly*, They have a number of damnable errors, and a false worship to set up, and intend to take away the ordinances of Christ, and government of His kirk:

all this cannot be done, unless they have the sole power in their hands, and this they cannot have until the king and his posterity be cut off. But I leave this, and come to the present solemnity; there's a prince to be enthroned, good Jehoiada will have the crown put upon his head.

It may be questioned why they went about this coronation in a time of so great hazard, when Athaliah had reigned six years. Had it not been better to have defeated Athaliah, and then to have crowned the king? Two reasons may be rendered why they delay the coronation. (1) To crown the king was a duty they were bound to. Hazard should not make men leave their duty; they did their duty, and left the success to God. (2) They crowned the young king, to endear the people's affections to their own native prince, and to alienate their hearts from her that had usurped the kingdom. If they had delayed (the king being known to be preserved), it might have brought on not only compliance with her, but also subjection to her government, by resting in it, and being content to lay aside the righteous heir of the crown.

The same is observed in our case; and many wonder that you should crown the king in a dangerous time, when the usurpers have such power in the land. The same reasons may serve to answer for your doing. (1) It is our necessary duty to crown the king upon all hazards, and to leave the success to God. (2) It appeareth now it hath been too long delayed. Delay is dangerous, because of the compliance of some, and treachery of others. If it shall be delayed longer, it is to be feared that the most part shall sit down under the shadow of the bramble, the destroying usurpers.

I come to the particular handling of the present text: and, to speak from it to the present time, I have read the twelfth and seventeenth verses, because of these two which meet together in the crowning of a king, and his renewing the covenant. Amongst many particulars which may be

handled from this text, I shall confine myself to these five, 1. The crown, "He put the crown upon his head." 2. The testimony, "He gave him the testimony." 3. The anointing, "They anointed him." These three are in the twelfth verse. As for that which is spoken of the people's joy, we shall give it a touch when we come to the people's duty. 4. The covenant between God and king and the people; "Jehoiada made a covenant between God and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people." 5. The covenant between the king and the people; "between the king also and the people."

I. The First thing is the crown is put upon his head. A crown is the most excellent badge of royal majesty. To discourse on crowns in a state way, I shall leave unto statesmen, and lay only these three before you of the crown.

I. In putting on of the crown, it should be well fastened, for kings' crowns are oftentimes tottering, and this is a time wherein they totter. There are two things which make kings' crowns to totter, great sins, and great commotions and troubles; take heed of both.

1. There are many sins upon our king and his family: sin will make the surest crown that ever men set on to totter. The sins of former kings have made this a tottering crown. I shall not insist here, seeing there hath been a solemn day of humiliation thro' the land on Thursday last, for the sins of the royal family; I wish the Lord may bless it; and desire the king may be truly humbled for his own sins, and the sins of his father's house, which have been great; beware of putting on these sins with the crown; for if you put them on, all the well-wishers to a king in the three kingdoms will not be able to hold on the crown, and keep it from tottering, yea, from falling. Lord, take away the controversy with the royal family, that the crown may be fastened sure upon the king's head, without falling or tottering.

2. Troubles and commotions in a kingdom make crowns

to totter. A crown at the best, and in the most calm times, is full of troubles; which, if it were well weighed by men, there would not be such hunting after crowns. I read of a great man who, considering the trouble and care that accompanied the crown, said, "He would not take it up at his foot, though he might have it for taking." Now, if a crown at the best be so full of troubles, what shall one think of a crown at the worst, when there are so great commotions, wherein the crown is directly aimed at? Surely it must be a tottering crown at the best, especially when former sins have brought on these troubles. As the remedy of the former is true humiliation, and turning unto God; so the remedy of the latter, speaking of David's crown, "Thou settest a crown of pure gold upon his head." God set on David's crown, and therefore it was settled, notwithstanding of many troubles. Men may set on crowns, and they may throw them off again; but when God setteth them on, they will be fast. Enemies have touched the crown of our king, and cast it off in the other kingdom, and have made it totter in this kingdom. Both the king who is to be crowned, and you who are to crown him, should deal earnestly with God, to set the crown on the king's head, and to keep it on against all the commotions of this cruel generation.

II. A king should esteem more of the people he reigneth over, than of his crown. Kings used to be so taken up with their crowns, that they despise their people. I would have a king following Christ the King of His people, who saith of them, "Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." Christ accounteth His people, His crown and diadem; so should a king esteem the people of the Lord, over whom he ruleth, to be his crown and diadem. Take away the people, and a crown is but an empty symbol.

III. A king, when he getteth the crown on his head, should

think, at the best it is but a fading crown. All the crowns of kings are but fading crowns: therefore they should have an eye upon that "crown of glory that fadeth not away." And upon a "kingdom that cannot be shaken." That crown and kingdom belongeth not to kings as kings, but unto believers; and a believing king hath this comfort, that when "he hath endured a while, and been tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."

II. The Second thing in this solemnity is the testimony. By this is meant the law of God, so called, because it testifieth of the mind and will of God. It was commanded, "When the king shall sit upon the throne of his kingdom, he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, and it shall be with him, that he may read therein all the days of his life." The king should have the testimony for these three uses. 1. For his information in the ways of God. This use of the king's having "the book of the law" is expressed, "That he may learn to fear the Lord his God." The reading of other books may do a king good for government, but no book will teach him the way to salvation, but the book of God. Christ biddeth "search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they testify of Me." He is a blessed man, "who meditateth in the law of the Lord day and night." King David was well acquainted herewith. Kings should be well exercised in scripture. It is reported of Alphonsus, king of Arragon, that he read the Bible fourteen times with glosses thereupon. I recommend to the king to take some hours for reading the Holy Scriptures; it will be a good means to make him acquainted with God's mind, and with Christ as Saviour. 2. For his direction in government. Kings read books that may teach them to govern well, but all the books a king can read will not make him govern to please God, as this book. I know nothing that is good in government, but a king may learn it out of the

book of God. For this cause, Joshua is commanded "that the book of the law shall not depart out of his mouth;" and he is commanded "to do according to all that is written therein." He should not only do himself that which is written in it, but do, and govern his people according to all that is written in it. King David knew this use of the testimony, who said, "Thy testimonies are my delight, and my counsellors." The best counsels that ever a king getteth are in the book of God: yea, the testimonies are the best and surest counsellors; because altho' a king's counsellors be never so wise and trusty, yet they are not so free with a king as they ought: but the scriptures tell kings very freely, both their sins and their duty. 3. For preservation and custody. The king is *custos utriusque tabulæ*, the keeper of both tables. Not that he should take upon him the power, either to dispense the word of God, or to dispense with it: but that he should preserve the word of God and true religion, according to the word of God, pure, entire, and uncorrupted, within his dominions, and transmit them so to posterity; and also be careful to see his subjects observe both tables, and to punish the transgressors of the same.

III. The Third thing in this solemnity is the "anointing of the king." The anointing of kings was not absolutely necessary under the Old Testament, for we read not that all the kings of Judah and Israel were anointed. The Hebrews observe that anointing of kings was used in three cases. 1. When the first of a family was made king, as Saul, David. 2. When there was a question for the crown, as in case of Solomon and Adonijah. 3. When there was an interruption of the lawful succession by usurpation as in the case of Joash. There is an interruption, by the usurpation of Athaliah, therefore he is anointed. If this observation hold, as it is probable, then it was not absolutely necessary under the Old Testament; and therefore far less under the New.

Because it may be said that in our case there is an

interruption by usurpation, let it be considered that the anointing under the Old Testament was typical; although all kings were not types of Christ, yet the anointing of kings, priests and prophets, was typical of Christ, and His offices; but, Christ being now come, all those ceremonies cease: and, therefore, the anointing of kings ought not to be used in the New Testament.

If it be said, anointing of kings hath been in use amongst christians, not only papist but protestant, as in the kingdom of England, and our late king was anointed with oil, it may be replied, they who used it under the New Testament took it from the Jews without warrant. It was most in use with the bishops of Rome, who, to keep kings and emperors subject to themselves did swear them to the Pope when they were anointed, (and yet the Jewish priests did never swear kings to themselves.) As for England, although the Pope was cast off, yet the subjection of kings to bishops was still retained, for they anointed the king and swore him to the maintenance of their prelatical dignity. They are here who were witnesses at the coronation of the late king; the bishops behoved to perform that rite: and the king behoved to be sworn to them. But now by the blessing of God, popery and prelacy are removed: the bishops as limbs of Antichrist are put to the door: let the anointing of kings with oil go to the door with them, and let them never come in again.

The anointing with material oil maketh not a king the anointed of the Lord, for he is so without it: he is the anointed of the Lord who, by divine ordinance and appointment is a king. God called Cyrus His anointed; yet we read not that he was anointed with oil. Kings are anointed of the Lord, because, by the ordinance of the Lord, their authority is sacred and inviolable. It is enough for us to have the thing, tho' we want the ceremony, which being laid aside, I will give some observations of the thing.

1. A king, being the Lord's anointed, should be thinking upon a better unction, even that spiritual unction wherewith believers are anointed. "The anointing ye have received of Him abideth in you." And "He that hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us." This anointing is not proper to kings, but common to believers: few kings are so anointed. A king should strive to be a good Christian, and then a good king: the anointing with grace is better than the anointing with oil. It is of more worth for a king to be the anointed of the Lord with grace, than to be the greatest monarch of the world without it.

2. This anointing may put a king in mind of the gifts, wherewith kings should be endowed, for discharge of their royal calling. For anointing did signify the gifts of office. It is said of Saul, when he was anointed king; "God gave him another heart." And "The Spirit of God came upon him." It is meant of a heart for his calling, and a spirit of ability for government. It should be our desire this day, that our king may have a spirit for his calling; as the spirit of wisdom, fortitude, justice and other princely endowments.

3. This anointing may put subjects in mind of the sacred dues of the authority of a king. He should be respected as the Lord's anointed. There are diverse sorts of persons that are enemies to the authority of kings; as 1. Anabaptists, who deny there should be kings in the New Testament: they would have no kings nor civil magistrates. 2. The late Photinians, who speak respectfully of kings and magistrates, but they take away from them their power, and the exercise of it in the administration of justice. 3. Those who rise against kings in open rebellion, as Absalom and Sheba, who said, "What have we to do with David, the son of Jesse? To your tents, O Israel." 4. They who do not rebel openly, yet they despise a king in their heart, like these sons of Belial, who said of Saul, after he was anointed king, "Shall

this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents." All these meet in our present age. 1. Anabaptists, who are against the being of kings, are very rife. You may find, to our great grief, a great number of them in that army, that hath unjustly invaded the land, who have trampled upon the authority of kings. 2. These are also of the second sort, who are secretly Photinians in this point, they allow of kings in profession; but they are against the exercise of their power in the administration of justice. 3. A third sort are in open rebellion, even all that generation which are risen up not only against the person of a king, but against kingly government. 4. There is a fourth, who profess they acknowledge a king; but despise him in their heart, saying "Shall this man save us?" I wish all had David's tenderness, whose heart did smite him, when he did but cut off the lap of Saul's garment, that we may be far from cutting off a lap of the just power and greatness which God hath allowed to the king, and we have bound ourselves by covenant not to diminish.

I have gone through the three particulars contained in verse 12. I come to the other two, in verse 17, which appertain also to this day's work; for our king is not only to be crowned, but to renew a covenant with God, and His people; and to make a covenant with the people. Answerable hereto, there is a twofold covenant in the words, one between God, and the king, and the people: God being the one party, the king and the people, the other; another between the king and the people, the king being the one party, and the people the other.

The covenant with God is the fourth particular propounded, to be spoken of. The sum of this covenant, ye may find in Josiah's renewing the covenant, "to walk after the Lord, and keep His commandments and testimonies, with all the heart, and to perform the words of the covenant." The renewing of the covenant was after a great defection

from God, and the setting up of a false worship. The king and the people of God bound themselves before the Lord, to set up the true worship, and to abolish the false. Scotland hath a preference in this before other nations. In time of defection, they have renewed a covenant with God, to reform all; and because the king, after a great defection in the families, is to renew the covenant, I shall mention some particulars from the league and covenant.

1. We are bound to maintain the true reformed religion, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, established in this kingdom, and to endeavour the reformation of religion in the other two kingdoms, according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed kirks. By this article, the king is obliged, not only to maintain religion as it was established in Scotland, but also to endeavour the reformation of religion in his other kingdoms. The king would consider well, when it shall please God, to restore him to his government there, that he is bound to endeavour the establishment of the work of reformation there, as well as to maintain it here.

2. According to the second article, the king is bound without respect of persons, to extirpate popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, and profaneness, and whatso ever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine, and the power of godliness. And therefore popery is not to be suffered in the royal family, nor within his dominions; prelacy once plucked up by the root, is not to be permitted to take root again; all heresy and error whatsoever must be opposed by him, to the uttermost of his power; and by the covenant, the king must be far from toleration of any false religion within his dominions.

3. As the people are bound to maintain the king's person and authority, in the maintenance of the true religion, and liberties of the kingdom: so the king is bound with them, to maintain the rights and privileges of the

parliament and the liberties of the subjects, according to the third article.

4. We are bound to discover, and to bring unto condign punishment, all such as have been, or shall be, incendiaries, malignants, or evil instruments, in hindering the reformation of religion; dividing the king from the people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or making any faction, or parties amongst the people. Hereby the king is bound to have an eye upon such, and neither allow of them nor comply with them; but to concur according to his power, to have them censured and punished, as is expressed in the fourth article.

I shall sum up all in this, that a king, in entering into covenant with God, should do as kings did of old, when they entered in covenant; they and their people went on in the work of reformation, as appeareth here. "And all the people of the land went into the house of Baal, and brake it down," &c. And godly Josiah, when he entered in covenant, made a thorough reformation. There is a fourfold reformation in scripture, and contained in the league and covenant. 1. A personal reformation. 2. A family reformation. 3. A reformation of judicatories. 4. A reformation of the whole land. Kings have had their hand in all the four; and therefore I recommend them to our king.

1. A personal reformation. A king should reform his own life, that he may be a pattern of godliness to others; and to this he is tied by the covenant. The godly reformers of Judah were pious and religious men. A king should not follow Machiavelli's counsel, who requireth not that a prince should be truly religious, but saith, "that a shadow of it, and external simulation, are sufficient." A devilish counsel; and it is just with God to bring a king to the shadow of a kingdom, who hath but the shadow of religion. We know that dissembling kings have been punished of God; and let our king know that no king but a religious king, can please God. David is highly commended for godliness; Hezekiah

a man eminent for piety; Josiah, a young king, commended for the tenderness of his heart, when he heard the law of the Lord read; he was much troubled before the Lord, when he heard the judgments threatened against his father's house, and his people. It is earnestly wished that our king's heart may be tender and truly humbled before the Lord, for the sins of his father's house, and of the land; and for the many evils that are upon that family, and upon the kingdom.

2. A family reformation. The king should reform his family, after the example of godly kings. Asa, when he entered in covenant, spared not his mother's idolatry. The house of our king hath been much defiled by idolatry. The king is now in covenant, and to renew the covenant, let the royal family be reformed; and, that it may be a religious family, wherein God will have pleasure, let it be purged, not only of idolatry, but of profanity and looseness, which hath abounded in it. Much hath been spoken of this matter; but little hath been done in it. Let the king and others, who have charge in that family, think it lieth upom them, as a duty, to purge it. And if ye would have a family well purged, and constitute, take David for a pattern, in the purgation and constitution of his, "The froward heart, wicked persons, and slanderers, he will have far from him: but his eyes are upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with him." If there be a man better than another in the land, he should be for the king, and his family: ye may extend his reformation to the court. A profane court is dangerous for a king. It hath been observed as a provoking sin in England, which hath drawn down judgment upon king and court, as appeareth this day. It is to be wished that such were in the court, as David speaketh of in that psalm. Let the king see to it, and resolve with David, "That he who worketh deceit, shall not dwell within his house: and he who telleth lies, shall not tarry in his sight."

3. Reformation in judicatories. It should be carefully

seen to, that judicatories be reformed; and that men, fearing God and hating covetousness, may be placed in them. A king in covenant, should do as Jehoshaphat did. "He set judges in the land, and said, take heed what ye do; ye judge not for men, but for the Lord, who is with you in judgment: wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be before you."

4. The reformation of the whole land, the king's eye should be upon it. "Jehoshaphat went out through the people, from Beersheba to mount Ephraim; and brought them back to the Lord God of their fathers." Our land hath great need of reformation; for there is a part of it that hath scarce ever yet found the benefit of reformation, they are lying without the gospel. It will be a good work for a covenanted king, to have a care that the gospel may be preached through the whole land. Care also should be taken, that they who have the gospel may live suitably thereto. If a king would be a thorough reformer, he must be reformed himself, otherwise he will never lay reformation to heart. To make a king a good reformer, I wish him these qualifications, according to the truth and in sincerity, wherewith they report Trajan the emperor to have been endued; he was, 1. Devout at home. 2 Courageous in war. 3. Just in his judicatures. 4. Prudent in all his affairs. True piety, fortitude, justice and prudence, are notable qualifications in a prince who would reform a kingdom, and reform well.

I come now to the fifth and last particular; and that is the covenant made between the king and the people: when a king is crowned and received by the people, there is a covenant or mutual contract between him and them, containing conditions, mutually to be observed: time will not suffer to insist upon many particulars. I shall only lay before you these three particulars. 1. It is clear from this covenant, that a king hath not absolute power to do what he pleaseth: he is tied to conditions by virtue of a covenant. 2. It is clear from this covenant, that a people are bound to obey

their king in the Lord. 3. I shall present the king with some directions for the right government of the people who are bound to obey.

I. It is clear, that the king's power is not absolute, as kings and flattering courtiers apprehend; a king's power is a limited power by this covenant; and there is a threefold limitation of the king's power. 1. In regard of subordination. There is power above his, even God's power, whom he is obliged to obey; and to whom he must give an account of his administration, (and yesterday ye heard that text, "by Me kings reign.") Kings have not only their crowns from God, but they must reign according to His will. He is called the "Minister of God;" he is but God's servant. I need not stay upon this; kings and all others will acknowledge this limitation. 2. In regard of laws, a king is sworn at his coronation, to rule according to the standing received laws of the kingdom. The laws he is sworn to, limit him that he cannot do against them, without a sinful breach of this covenant between the king and the people. 3. In regard of government, the total government is not upon a king. He hath counsellors as a parliament or estates in the land, who share in the burden of government. No king should have the sole government: it was never the mind of those who received a king to rule them, to lay all government upon him, to do what he pleaseth, without controlment. There is no man able alone to govern all. The kingdom should not lay that upon one man, who may easily miscarry. The estates of the land are bound in this contract to bear the burden with him.

These men who have flattered kings to take unto themselves an absolute power, to do what they please, have wronged kings and kingdoms. It had been good that kings, of late, had carried themselves so, as this question of the king's power might never have come in debate; for they have been great losers thereby. Kings are very desirous to

have things spoken and written, to hold up their arbitrary and unlimited power; but that way doth exceedingly wrong them. There is one, a learned man, I confess, who hath written a book for the maintenance of the absolute power of kings, called *Defensio Regis*, whereby he hath wronged himself in his reputation, and the king in his government. As for the fact, in taking away the life of the late king, (whatever was God's justice in it) I do agree with him to condemn it, as a most unjust and horrid act, upon their part who did it: but when he cometh to speak of the power of kings, in giving unto them an absolute and unlimited power, urging the damnable maxim, *quod libet licet*, he will have a king to do what he pleaseth, *impune*, and without controlment. In this, I cannot but dissent from him.

In regard of subordination some say, that a king is accountable to none but God. Do what he will, let God take order with it; this leadeth kings to atheism, let them do what they please, and to take God in their own hand: in regard of laws, they teach nothing to kings but tyranny: and in regard of government, they teach a king to take an arbitrary power to himself, to do what he pleaseth without controlment. How dangerous this hath been to kings, is clear by sad experience. Abuse of power and arbitrary government, hath been one of God's great controversies with our king's predecessors. God in His justice, because power hath been abused, hath thrown it out of their hands: and I may confidently say that God's controversy with the kings of the earth is for their arbitrary and tyrannical government.

It is good for our king to learn to be wise in time, and know that he receiveth this day a power to govern, but a power limited by contract; and these conditions he is bound by oath to stand to. Kings are deceived who think that the people are ordained for the king; and not the king for the people; the Scripture sheweth the contrary. The king is the "minister of God for the people's good." God will

not have a king, in an arbitrary way, to encroach upon the possessions of subjects, "A portion is appointed for the prince." And it is said, "My princes shall no more oppress My people; and the rest of the land, shall they give unto the house of Israel, according to their tribes." The king hath his distinct possessions and revenues from the people; he must not oppress and do what he pleaseth, there must be no tyranny upon the throne.

I desire not to speak much upon this subject. Men have been very tender in meddling with the power of kings; yet, seeing these days have brought forth debates concerning the power of kings, it will be necessary to be clear in this matter. Extremities would be shunned. A king should keep within the bounds of the covenant made with the people, in the exercise of his power; and subjects should keep within the bounds of this covenant, in regulating that power. Concerning the last, I shall propound these three to your consideration.

1. A king, abusing his power to the overthrow of religion, laws and liberties, which are the very fundamentals of this contract and covenant, may be controlled and opposed; and if he set himself to overthrow all these by arms, then they who have power, as the estates of a land, may and ought to resist by arms: because he doth, by that opposition, break the very bonds, and overthroweth all the essentials of this contract and covenant. This may serve to justify the proceedings of this kingdom against the late king, who, in an hostile way, set himself to overthrow religion, parliaments, laws and liberties.

2. Every breach of covenant, wherein a king falleth, after he hath entered into covenant, doth not dissolve the bond of the covenant. Neither should subjects lay aside a king for every breach, except the breaches be such as overthrow the fundamentals of religion, and of the covenant with the people. Many examples of this may be brought from scrip-

ture. I shall give but one. King Asa entered solemnly into covenant with God and the people. After that, he falleth in gross transgressions and breaches. He associated himself and entered into league with Benhadad, king of Syria, an idolater; he imprisoned Hanani, the Lord's prophet, who reproved him, and threatened judgment against that association, and at that same time he oppressed some of the people: and yet, for all this, they neither laid him aside, nor accounted him an hypocrite.

3. Private persons should be very circumspect about that which they do in relation to the authority of kings. It is very dangerous for private men, to meddle with the power of kings, and the suspending them from the exercise thereof. I do ingenuously confess that I find no example of it. The prophets taught not such doctrine to their people, nor the apostles, nor the reformed kirks. Have ever private men, pastors or professors, given in to the estates of a land as their judgment, unto which they resolve to adhere, that a king should be suspended from the exercise of his power? And, if we look upon these godly pastors, who lived in king James's time, of whom one may truly say, more faithful men lived not in these last times: for they spared not to tell the king his faults, to his face: yea, some of them suffered persecution for their honesty and freedom, yet we never read nor have heard, that any of these godly pastors joined with other private men, did ever remonstrate to parliament or estate as their judgment, that the king should be suspended from the exercise of his royal power.

II. It is clear from this covenant, that people should obey their king in the Lord: for, as the king is bound by the covenant to make use of his power to their good; so, they are bound to obey him in the Lord in the exercise of that power. About the people's duty to the king, take these four observations.

1. That the obedience of the people is in subordination

to God; for the covenant is first with God, and then with the king. If a king command any thing contrary to the will of God—in this case, Peter saith, "it is better to obey God, than man." There is a line drawn from God to the people, they are lowest in the line: and have magistrates inferior and supreme above them, and God above all. When the king commandeth the people that which is lawful, and commanded by God, then he should be obeyed; because he standeth in right line under God, who hath put him in his place. But if he command that which is unlawful, and forbidden of God, in that he should not be obeyed to do it; because he is out of his line. That a king is to be obeyed with this subordination, is evident from scripture; take one place for all. At the beginning, ye have both obedience urged to superior powers, as the ordinance of God, and damnation threatened against those who resist the lawful powers.

It is said by some, that many ministers in Scotland would not have king JESUS, but king Charles to reign. Faithful men are wronged by such speeches. I do not understand these men. For, if they think that a king and JESUS are inconsistent, then they will have no king: but I shall be far from entertaining such thoughts of them. If they think the doing a necessary duty for king Charles is to prefer his interest to Christ's, this is also an error. Honest ministers can very well discern between the interest of Christ, and of the king. I know no minister that setteth up king Charles, with prejudice to Christ's interest.

There are three sorts of persons who are not to be allowed in relation to the king's interest, 1. Such as have not been content to oppose a king in an evil course, (as they might lawfully do) but contrary to covenant vows and many declarations, have cast off kings and kingly government. These are the sectaries. 2. These who are so taken up with a king, as they prefer a king's interest to Christ's interest; which was the sin of our

engagers. 3. They who will have no duty done to a king, for fear of prejudicing Christ's interest. These are to be allowed, who urge duty to a king in subordination to Christ.

I shall desire that men may be real, when they make mention of Christ's interest; for these three mentioned profess and pretend the interest of Christ. The sectaries cover their destroying of kings with Christ's interest; whereunto, indeed, they have had no respect, being enemies to His kingdom. And experience hath made it undeniable. The engagers alleged they were for Christ's interest; but they misplaced it. Christ's interest should have gone before, but they drew it after the interest of a king, which evidenced their want of due respect to Christ's interest. As for the third, who delay duty for fear of preferring the king's interest to Christ's, I shall not take upon me to judge their intentions. I wish they may have charity to those who think they may do duty to a king in subordination to Christ, yea, that they ought and should do duty, whatever men's fears be of the prejudice that may follow.

If to be against the suspending of the king from the exercise of his power, and to be for the crowning of the king, according to the public faith of the kingdoms, he first performing all that kirk and state required of him in relation to religion, and civil liberties: if this be, I say, to prefer a king to Christ, let all men that are unbiassed, be judges in the case. We shall well avow, that we crown a king in subordination to God and his interest, in subordination to Christ's, which we judge, not only agreeable to the word of God, but also, that we are bound expressly in the covenant, to maintain the king in the preservation and defence of the true religion, and liberties of the kingdom, and not to diminish his just power and greatness.

2. That the covenant between God and the king and the people, goeth before the covenant between the king and the people; which sheweth, that a people's entering covenant with

God doth not lessen their obedience and allegiance to the king, but increaseth it, and maketh the obedience firmer: because we are in covenant with God, we should the more obey a covenanted king. It is a great error to think, that a covenant diminisheth obedience, it was ever thought accumulative. And indeed true religion layeth strict ties upon men in doing of their duty. "Wherefore ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake." A necessity to obey is laid upon all. Many subjects obey for wrath, but the godly obey for conscience' sake.

3. That a king covenanted with God should be much respected by his subjects. They should love him. There is an inbred affection in the hearts of the people to their king. In the 12th verse it is said, that "the people clapped their hands for joy, and said, God save the king." They had no sooner seen their native king installed in his kingdom, but they rejoiced exceedingly, and saluted him with wishes of safety. Whatever be men's affections, or respects, this day, to our king, certainly it is a duty lying on us both to pray for, and rejoice in his safety. The very end that God hath in giving us kings maketh this clear. "That we may live under them in godliness and honesty." And therefore, prayers and supplications are to be made for all kings; even for those that are not in covenant; much more for these that are in covenant. Ye are receiving this day a crowned covenanted king, pray for saving grace to him, and that God would deliver him and us, out of the hand of these cruel enemies, and bless his government, and cause us to live a quiet and peaceable life under him in all godliness and honesty.

4. That as the king is solemnly sworn to maintain the right of the subjects against enemies, and is bound to hazard his life, and all that he hath for their defence: so, the people are also bound to maintain his person and authority, and to hazard life, and all that they have, in defending him.

I shall not take the question in its full latitude, taking in what a people are bound to in pursuing of a king's right in another nation, which is not our present question. Our question is, what a people should do when a kingdom is unjustly invaded by a foreign enemy, who seeketh the overthrow of religion, king and kingdom. Surely, if men be tied to any duty to a king and kingdom, they are tied in this case. I have two sorts of men to meet with here, who are deficient in doing this covenanted duty: 1. These who do not act against the enemy. 2. These who do act for the enemy. 1. The first I meet with, are they who act not, but lie by, to behold what will become of all: three sorts of men act not for the defence of an invaded kingdom; 1. Those who withdraw themselves from public councils, as from parliament or committee of estates: this withdrawing is not to act. 2. These act not who, upon an apprehension of the desperate state of things, do think that all is in such a condition, by the prevailing of the enemy, that there is no remedy: and therefore that it is best to sit still; and see how things go.

They who do not act upon scruple of conscience. I shall ever respect tenderness of conscience; and I wish there be no more but tenderness. If there be no more, men will strive to have their consciences well informed.

They may be supposed to scruple upon one of these grounds; 1. To act in such a cause, for the king's interest: sure I am, this was not a doubt before, but all seemed to agree to act for the king's interest, in subordination to Christ's, and this day there is no more sought. We own the king's interest only in a subordination to Christ's. Or, 2. To join with such instruments as are enemies to the work of God. Our answer to the estates' query resolves that such should not be entrusted: but we do not count these enemies who profess repentance, and declare themselves solemnly to be for the cause and the covenant, and evidence their willingness to

fight for them. If it be said their repentance is but counterfeit, we are bound to think otherwise in charity, till the contrary be seen: no man can judge of the reality of hearts: for we have now found by experience, that men who have been accounted above all exception have betrayed their trust. If any who have not yet repented of their former course shall be intrusted, we shall be sorry for it; and plainly say, that it ought not to be.

But I think there must be more in this, that men say they cannot act. For myself, I love not that word in our case; it is too frequent, he cannot act, and he cannot act. I fear there be three sorts of persons lurking under this covert. 1. Such as are pusillanimous, who have no courage to act against the enemy: the word is true of them, they cannot act because they dare not act. 2. Such as are selfish men, serving their idol credit: he hath been a man of honour, and now he feareth there will be no credit to fight against this prevailing enemy: therefore he cannot act, and save his credit. Be who thou wilt that hast this before thee, God shall blast thy reputation. Thou shalt neither have honour nor credit, to do a right turn in God's cause. 3 Such as are compliers, who cannot act, because they have a purpose to comply. There are that cannot act in an army, but they can betray an army by not acting; there are that cannot act for safety of a kingdom, but they betray it by not acting. In a word, there are who cannot join to act with those whom they account malignants (I speak not of declared and known malignants; but of such as have been, and are, fighting for the cause; yet by them esteemed malignants), but they can join with sectaries, open and declared enemies to kirk and kingdom. I wish subjects, who are bound to fight for the kingdom, would lay by that phrase of not acting, which is so frequent in the mouth of compliers, and offensive to them, who would approve themselves in doing duty for endangered religion, king and kingdom.

That men may be the more clear to act, I shall offer to your consideration some passages of Scriptures, about those who do not act against a common enemy.

1. There are many reproved for lying still while an enemy had invaded the land: as Reuben, with his divisions: Gilead, Dan, and Asher seeking themselves, are all reproved for not joining with the people of God, who were willing to jeopard their lives against "a mighty oppressing enemy." But there is one passage concerning Meroz, which fitteth our purpose, "The angel of the Lord said, Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." What this Meroz was, is not clear: yet all interpreters agree that they had opportunity and power to have joined with, and helped the people of the Lord, and it is probable they were near the place of the fight. They are cursed for not coming to the help of the Lord's people. This may be applied to those in the land, who will not help the Lord against the mighty.

2. Another passage you have. Reuben and Gad having a multitude of cattle, and having seen the land of Gilead, that it was a place for cattle, they desire of Moses and the princes, that the land may be given them, and they may not pass over Jordan. Moses reproveth them in these words, "Shall your brethren go to war; and shall ye sit still? Wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel?" Reuben and Gad make their apology, showing that they have no such intention to sit still, only they desire their wives and little ones may stay there: they themselves promise to go over Jordan, armed before Israel, and not to return before they were possessed in the land. Then Moses said unto them, "If you do so, then this shall be your possession. But, if ye do not so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sins will find you out."

I may apply this to them that cannot act; will ye sit

still, when the rest of your brethren are to hazard their lives against the enemy? We have reason to reprove you. If Moses, that faithful servant of God, was still jealous of Reuben and Gad, even after their apology and promise to act—for he saith, "If ye do not so"—have not honest and faithful servants of God, ground to be jealous of their brethren who refuse to act? Let them apologize what they will; for their not acting, I say, they sin against the Lord, and their sins shall find them out. It will be clearly seen, upon what intention they do not act.

3. A third passage. Saul hath David enclosed, that he can hardly escape. In that very instant there cometh a messenger to Saul, saying, "Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land." At the hearing of this message, "Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines." It is true, the Lord did provide for his servant David's escape, by this means: but, if ye consider Saul, he took it not so. Nothing moved him to leave this pursuit but the condition of the land, by the invading of an enemy. Three things might have moved Saul to stay and pursue David. 1. He hath him now in a strait, and hath such advantage, that he might have thought not to come readily by the like. 2. That altho' the Philistines be enemies, yet David is the most dangerous enemy; for he aimeth at no less than the crown. It were better to take conditions off the enemy, than to suffer David to live, and take the crown. 3. He might have said, if I leave David at this time and fight with the Philistines, and be beaten, he will get a power in his hand to undo me and my posterity. These may seem strong motives; but Saul is not moved with any of them. The present danger is the Philistines invading the land, and this danger is to be opposed, come of the danger from David what will. As if Saul had said, I will let David alone, I will meet with him another time, and

reckon with him: now there is no time for it, the Philistines are in the land, let us make haste against them. I wish that many of our countrymen had as great a love to their country, and as public a spirit for it, as this profane king had, then there would not be so many questions for acting, as men make this day.

The objections I have been touching are in men's thoughts and heads. First, some say, now the malignants are under, for this enemy is their rod. It is best to put them out of having any power: yea, there are some who would more willingly go to undo these, whom they account malignants, than against the common enemy, who are wasting the land. If they had Saul's resolution, they would say, the Philistines are in the land, let them alone, we will reckon with them at another time; we will now go against the common enemy.

They have also the second objection, the malignants are more dangerous enemies than the sectaries. I shall not now compare them to equal distance, and abstract from the present danger: but I shall compare them to the present posture of affairs. I am sure the sectaries having power in their hands, and a great part of the land in their possession, are far more dangerous than malignants, who have no power for the present: and therefore, the resolution should be, the sectaries have invaded the land, and are destroying it, let us go against them.

3. The third observation weigheth much with many. The malignants, being employed to fight for their country, may get such power in their hands as may hurt the cause. For answer: 1. The resolution given the query of the estates provideth against that, for therein is a desire that no such power should be put in their hand. 2. This fear goeth upon a supposition, that they do not repent their former course. This is an uncharitable judgment. We are bound to be more charitable of men professing repentance,

for with such we have to do only. And, to speak a word by the way to you who have been in a malignant course. Little good is expected from you, I pray you be honest, and disappoint them. I wish you true repentance, which will both disappoint them, and be profitable to yourselves. 3. I desire it may be considered, whether or not, fear of a danger to come from men, if they prevail against the common enemy, being only clothed with a capacity to fight for their country, be an argument against rising to oppose a seen and certain danger, coming from an enemy, clothed with power, and still prevailing. I conceive, it ought to be far from any, to hinder men to defend their country in such a case. I confess, indeed, the cause which we maintain hath met with many enemies, who have been against it, which requireth much tenderness; therefore men are to be admitted to trust, with such exceptions as may keep them out who are still enemies to the cause of God, have not professed repentance, renounced their former courses, and declared themselves for cause and covenant. I doubt not, but it shall be found, that the admitting such to fight in our case as it standeth, is agreeable to the word of God, and is not against the former public resolutions of kirk and state.

The second sort of persons we are to meet with, are such as act for the enemy, against the kingdom. If they be cursed who will not come out to help the Lord against the mighty: what a curse shall be upon them, who help the mighty against the Lord, as they do who act for the enemy? Three ways is the enemy helped against the cause and people of God.

1. By keeping correspondence with them, and giving them intelligence; there is nothing done against kirk or state, but they have intelligence of it. A baser way hath never been used in any nation Your counsels and purposes are made known to them. If there be any such here (as I fear they be), let them take this to them, they are of these who help

the mighty against the Lord, and the curse shall stick to them. 2. By strengthening the enemies' hands with questions, debates and determinations, in papers tending to the justifying of their unjust invasion. Whatever have been men's intentions in taking that way, yet the thing done by them, hath tended to the advantage of the enemy, and hath divided these who should have been joined in the cause, to the great weakening of the power of the kingdom, and this, interpretatively, is to act for the mighty against the Lord. 3. By gross compliance with the enemy, and going into them, doing all the evil offices they can, against their native kingdom. If Meroz was cursed for not helping, shall not these perfidious covenant-breakers and treacherous dealers against a distressed land be much more accursed, for helping and assisting a destroying enemy, so far as lieth in their power? These words may be truly applied to them who are helping strangers, enemies to God, His kirk, and religion, "Both he that helpeth, shall fall; and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fall together."

III. The third particular about this covenant remains to be spoken of; *to wit*, Some directions to the king, for the right performing of his duty, whereof I shall give seven.

1. A king, meeting with many difficulties in doing of duty, by reason of strong corruption within and many temptations without: he should be careful to seek God by prayer, for grace to overcome these impediments, and for an understanding heart to govern his people. Solomon, having in his option to ask what he would, he asked an understanding heart, to go out and in before his people; knowing that the government of a people was a very difficult work, and needed more than ordinary understanding. A king hath also many enemies (as our king hath this day), and a praying king is a prevailing king. Asa, when he had to do with a mighty enemy, prayed fervently and prevailed. Jehoshaphat was invaded by a mighty enemy, he prayed and did prevail.

Hezekiah prayed against Sennacherib's huge army and prevailed. Sir, you have many difficulties and oppositions to meet; acquaint yourself with prayer, be instant with God, and He will fight for you. Prayers are not in much request at court; but a covenanted king must bring them in request. I know a king is burthened with multiplicity of affairs, and will meet with many diversions; but, sir, you must not be diverted. Take hours, and set them apart for that exercise: men being once acquainted with your way, will not dare to divert you. Prayer to God will make your affairs easy all the day. I read of a king, of whom his courtiers said, "He spoke oftener with God, than with men." If you be frequent in prayer, you may expect the blessing of the Most High upon yourself, and upon your government.

2. A king must be careful of the kingdom which he hath sworn to maintain. We have had many of too private a spirit, by whom self-interest hath been preferred to the public; it becometh a king well to be of a public spirit, to care more for the public than his own interest. Senates and states have had mottoes written over the doors of their meeting-places. Over the senate house of Rome was written, *Ne quid respublica detrimenti capiat.* I shall wish this may be written over your assembly-houses; but there is another which I would have written with it, *Ne quid ecclesia detrimenti capiat.* Be careful of both; let neither kirk nor state suffer hurt; let them go together. The best way for the standing of a kingdom is a well constitute kirk. They deceive kings who make them believe that the government of the kirk—I mean presbyterial government—cannot suit with monarchy. They suit well, it being the ordinance of Christ, rendering unto God what is God's, and unto Cæsar what is Cæsar's.

3. Kings who have a tender care of the kirk are called nursing fathers. You should be careful that the gospel may have a free passage through the kingdom; and that the government of the kirk may be preserved entire according

to your solemn engagement. The kirk hath met with many enemies, as papists, prelates, malignants, which I pass as known enemies: but there are two sorts more, who at this time should be carefully looked on. 1. Sectaries, great enemies to the kirk, and to all the ordinances of Christ, and more particularly to presbyterial government, which they have, and would have, altogether destroyed. A king should set himself against these, because they are enemies, as well to the king as to the kirk, and strive to make both fall together. 2. Erastians, more dangerous snares to kings than sectaries; because kings can look well enough to these, who are against themselves, and their power, as sectaries, who will have no king. But erastians give more power to kings than they should have, and are great enemies to presbyterial government: for they would make kings believe that there is no government but the civil, and derived from thence, which is a great wrong to the Son of God, who hath the government of the kirk distinct from the civil, yet no ways prejudicial to it, being spiritual, and of another nature. Christ did put the magistrate out of suspicion, that His kingdom was not prejudicial to civil government, affirming, "My kingdom is not of this world." This government, Christ hath not committed to kings, but to the office-bearers of His house, who, in regard of civil subjection, are under the civil power as well as others; but, in their spiritual administration, they are under Christ, who hath not given unto any king upon earth the dispensation of spiritual things to His people.

Sir, you are in covenant with God and His people, and are obliged to maintain presbyterial government, as well against erastians as sectaries. I know this erastian humour aboundeth at court. It may be, some endeavour to make you encroach upon that for which God hath punished your predecessors Be who he will that meddleth with this government to overturn it, it shall be as heavy to him as the

burthensome stone to the enemies of the kirk. "They are cut in pieces, who burden themselves with it." 3. A king in covenant with the people of God, should make much of these who are in covenant with him, having in high estimation the faithful ministers of Christ, and the godly people of the land. It is rare to find kings lovers of faithful ministers and pious people. It hath been the fault of our own kings to persecute the godly. 1. Let the king love the servants of Christ, who speak the truth. Evil kings are branded with this, that they contemned the prophets. When Amaziah had taken the gods of Seir, and set them up for his gods, a prophet came to him and reproved him; unto whom the king said, "Who made thee of the king's council? Forbear, lest thou be smitten." This contempt of the prophet's warning is a forerunner of following destruction. Be a careful hearer of God's word; take with reproof; esteem of it, as David did, "It shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head." To make much of the faithful servants of Christ, will be an evidence of reality. 2. Let the king esteem well of godly professors. Let piety be in account. It is a fault very common, that pious men, because of their conscientious and strict walking, are hated by the profane, who love to live loosely: it is usual with profane men to labour to bring kings to a distaste of the godly; especially when men who have professed piety have become scandalous, whereupon they are ready to judge all pious men to be like them; and take occasion to speak evil of piety. I fear at this time, when men who have been commended for piety, have fallen foully and betrayed their trust, that men will take advantage to speak against the godly of the land; beware of this, for it is Satan's policy to put piety out of request: let not this move any: fall who will, piety is still the same, and pious men will make conscience both of their ways and trust; remember, they are precious in God's eyes who will not suffer men to despise

them, without their reward. Sir, let not your heart be from the godly in the land, whatever hath fallen out at this time: I dare affirm, there are very many really godly men who, by their prayers, are supporting your throne.

4. A king should be careful whom he putteth in places of trust, as a main thing for the good of the kingdom. It is a maxim, that trust should not be put in their hands who have oppressed the people, or have betrayed their trust. There is a passage in a story meet for this purpose: one Septimus Arabinus, a man famous, or rather infamous, for oppression, was put out of the Senate, but re-admitted about this time; Alexander Severus being chosen to the empire, the Senators did entertain him with public salutations and congratulations. Severus, espying Arabinus amongst the senators, cried out, *O numina! Arabinus non solum vivit, sed in senatum venit.* Ah! Arabinus not only liveth, but he is in the senate. Out of just indignation, he could not endure to see him. As all are not meet for places of trust in judicatures, so all are not meet for places of trust in armies. Men should be chosen who are godly, and able for the charge.

But there are some who are not meet for trust. 1. They who are godly, but have no skill or ability for the places. A man may be a truly godly man who is not fit for such place; and no wrong is done to him nor to godliness, when the place is denied to him. I wonder how a godly man can take upon him a place, whereof he hath no skill. 2. They who have neither skill nor courage, are very unmeet; for, if it be a place of never so great moment, faint-heartedness will make them quit it. 3. They who are both skilful and stout, yet are not honest, but perfidious and treacherous, should have no trust at all. Of all these we have sad experience, experience which should not move you to make choice of profane and godless men, by whom a blessing is not to be expected, but it should move you to be wary in your choice:

I am confident such may be had, who will be faithful for religion, king and kingdom.

5. There hath been much debate about the exercise of the king's power; yet he is put in the exercise of his power, and this day put in a better capacity to exercise it by his coronation. Many are afraid that the exercise of his power shall prove dangerous to the cause, and indeed I confess there is ground of fear, when we consider how this power hath been abused by former kings: therefore, Sir, make good use of this power, and see that you rather keep within bounds, than exceed in the exercise of it. I may very well give such a counsel as an old counsellor gave to a king of France; he, having spent many years at court, desired to retire into the country for enjoying privacy fit for his age; and, having obtained leave, the king his master required him to sit down, and write some advice of government, to leave behind him, which he out of modesty declined: the king would not be denied, but left with him pen and ink and a sheet of paper; he, being alone, after some thoughts, wrote with fair and legible characters in the head of the sheet, *modus*; in the middle of the sheet, *modus*; and in the foot of the sheet, *modus*; and wrote no more in all the paper, which he wrapped up and delivered to the king; meaning that the best counsel he could give him, was, that he should keep temper in all things. Nothing more fit for a young king than to keep temper in all things. Take this counsel, Sir, and be moderate in the use of your power. The best way to keep power, is moderation in the use of it.

6. The king hath many enemies, even such as are enemies to his family and to all kingly government; and are now in the bowels of this kingdom, wasting and destroying; bestir yourself, according to vows and oaths that are upon you, to be active for the relief of Christ's kingdom, borne down by them, in all the three kingdoms; and for the relief of this kingdom grievously oppressed by them. We shall earnestly

desire that God would put that spirit upon our king, now entered upon public government, which He hath put upon the deliverers of His people from their cruel oppressors.

In speaking of the king's behaviour to enemies, one thing I cannot pass. There is much spoken of a treaty with this enemy: I am not of the judgment of some, who distinguish a treaty before invasion and after invasion, and say, treatying is very lawful before invasion; because it is supposed that there is a little wrong done: but after invasion, when a kingdom is wronged and put to infinite losses, then they say a treaty is to be shunned; but in my judgment, a treaty may be lawful after invasion and wrongs sustained: the end of war is peace, neither should desire of revenge obstruct it, providing it be such a treaty and peace as is not prejudicial to religion, nor to the safety of the kingdom, nor to the undoubted right of the king, nor to the league and covenant, whereunto we are so solemnly engaged.

But, I must break off this treaty with a story related in Plutarch. The city of Athens was in a great strait, wherein they knew not what to do. Themistocles in this strait said he had something wherein to give his opinion, for the behoof of the state, but he thought it not fit to deliver himself publicly. Aristides, a man of great trust, is appointed to hear him privately, and to make an account as he thought meet. When Aristides came to make his report to the senate, he told them that Themistocles' advice was indeed profitable, but not honest, whereupon the people would not so much as hear it. There is much whispering of a treaty, they are not willing to speak publicly of it: hear them in private, and it may be the best advice shall be profitable, but not honest. If a treaty should be, let it be both profitable and honest, and no lover of peace will be against it.

7. Seeing the king is now upon the renewing of the covenants, it should be remembered that we enter into covenant, according to our profession therein, with reality, sincerity,

and constancy, which are the qualifications of good covenanters. Many doubt of your reality in the covenant, let your sincerity and reality be evidenced by your stedfastness and constancy; for many have begun well, but have not been constant. In the sacred history of kings, we find a note upon kings according to their carriages: one of three sentences is written upon them. 1. Some kings have this written on them, "He did evil in the sight of the Lord." They neither begin well, nor end well; such an one was Ahaz, king of Judah, and divers others in that history. 2. Others have this written on them, "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart." Such an one was Amaziah king of Judah. He was neither sincere nor constant: when God blessed him with victory against the Edomites, he fell foully from the true worship of God, and set up the gods of Edom. 3. A third sentence is written upon the godly kings of Judah, "He did right in the sight of the Lord, with a perfect heart." As Asa, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, and Josiah, they were both sincere and constant. Let us neither have the first nor the second, but the third written upon our king, "He did right in the sight of the Lord, with a perfect heart." Begin well, and continue constant.

Before I close, I shall seek leave to lay before our young king, two examples to beware of, and one to follow. The two warning examples, one of them is in the text, another in our own history.

The first example is of Joash. He began well, and went on in a godly reformation all the days of Jehoiada; but, it is observed, "That after the days of Jehoiada, the princes of Judah came, and did obeisance to the king, and he hearkened unto them." It appeareth, they had been lying in wait till the death of Jehoiada; and took the opportunity to destroy the true worship of God, and set up false worship, flattering the king for that effect: for it is said, "They left the house

of the Lord, and served groves and idols;" and were so far from being reclaimed by the prophet of the Lord that was sent unto them, that they conspired against Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, who reproved them mildly for their idolatry, and stoned him with stones, and slew him at the king's commandment. And it is said, "Joash remembered not the kindness that Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son." Sir, take this example for a warning. You are obliged by the covenant to go on in the work of reformation. It may be, some great ones are waiting their time, not having opportunity to work for the present, till afterward they may make obeisance, and persuade you to destroy all that hath been done in the work of God, these divers years. Beware of it; let no allurement or persuasion prevail with you, to fall from that which this day you bind yourself to maintain.

Another example I give you, yet in recent memory, of your grandfather, king James. He fell, to be very young, in a time full of difficulties; yet there was a godly party in the land who did put the crown upon his head. And when he came to some years, he and his people entered into a covenant with God. He was much commended by godly and faithful men, comparing him to young Josiah standing at the altar, renewing a covenant with God; and he himself did thank God that he was born in a reformed kirk, better reformed than England; for they retained many popish ceremonies: yea better reformed than Geneva; for they keep some holy days; charging his people to be constant and promising himself to continue in that reformation, and to maintain the same. Notwithstanding of all this, he made a foul defection: he remembered not the kindness of them who had held the crown upon his head; yea he persecuted faithful ministers for opposing that course of defection: he never rested till he had undone presbyterial government and kirk assemblies, setting up bishops, and bringing in ceremonies, against

which formerly he had given large testimony. In a word, he laid the foundation whereupon his son, our late king, did build much mischief to religion, all the days of his life. Sir, I lay this example before you the rather because it is so near you, that the guiltiness of the transgression lieth upon the throne and family, and it is one of the sins for which you have professed humiliation very lately. Let it be laid to heart, take warning, requite not faithful men's kindness with persecution; yea, requite not the Lord so, who hath preserved you to this time, and is setting a crown upon your head. Requite not the Lord with apostasy and defection from a sworn covenant: but be stedfast in the covenant, as you would give testimony of your true humiliation for the defection of these that went before you.

I have set up these two examples before you, as beacons to warn you to keep off such dangerous courses, and shall add one for imitation, which, if followed, may happily bring with it the blessing of that godly man's adherence to God. The example is of Hezekiah, who did that "which was right in the sight of the Lord." It is said of him, "He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, and he clave unto the Lord, and departed not from following Him, but kept His commandments." And "The Lord was with him, and he prospered whithersoever he went forth."

Sir, follow this example, cleave unto the Lord, and depart not from following Him, and the Lord will be with you, and prosper you, whithersoever you go. To this Lord, from whom we expect a blessing upon this day's work, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

CHARLES II. TAKING THE COVENANTS.

SERMON being ended, prayer was made for a blessing upon the doctrine delivered. The king began to renew the covenants. First the National Covenant and then the Solemn League and Covenant were distinctly read. After the reading of these covenants, the minister prayed for grace to perform the contents of the covenants, and for faithful stedfastness in the oath of God: and then (the ministers, commissioners of the General Assembly, desired to be present, standing before the pulpit) he administered the oath unto the king, who, kneeling and lifting up his right hand, did swear in the words following.

"I CHARLES, king of Great Britain, France and Ireland, do assure and declare, by my solemn oath, in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of hearts, my allowance and approbation of the National Covenant, and of the Solemn League and Covenant above written, and faithfully oblige myself to prosecute the ends thereof in my station and calling; and that I for myself and successors, shall consent and agree to all acts of parliament enjoining the national covenant and the solemn league and covenant, and fully establishing presbyterial government, the directory for worship, confession of faith, and catechisms, in the kingdom of Scotland, as they are approven by the General Assemblies of this Kirk, and Parliament of this kingdom; and that I shall give my royal assent, to acts and ordinances of parliament passed, or to be passed, enjoining the same in my other dominions: and that I shall observe these in my own practice and family, and shall never make opposition to any of these, or endeavour any change thereof."*

* This second coronation oath is inserted in the 15th act of parliament, and in the parliament, Feb. 7th, 1649; and is, with the first coronation oath following, insert and approven in the declaration of the General Assembly 27th July, 1649.

After the king had thus solemnly sworn the National Covenant, the League and Covenant, and the King's Oath, subjoined unto both, being drawn up in a fair parchment; the king did subscribe the same, in presence of all.

Thereafter the king ascended the stage, and sitteth down in the chair of state. Then the lords, great constable, and marshal, went to the four corners of the stage, with the lion going before them; who spoke to the people these words, "Sirs, I do present unto you the king CHARLES, the rightful and undoubted heir of the crown, and dignity of this realm: this day is by the parliament of this kingdom appointed for his coronation; and are you not willing to have him for your king, and become subject to his commandments?"

In which action, the king's majesty stood up, showing himself to the people, in each corner; and the people expressed their willingness, by cheerful acclamations in these words, "God save the king, CHARLES the Second."

Thereafter the king's majesty, supported by the constable and marshal, cometh down from the stage, and sitteth down in the chair, where he heard the sermon. The minister, accompanied with the ministers before-mentioned, cometh from the pulpit toward the king, and requireth, if he was willing to take the oath, appointed to be taken at the coronation? The king answered, he was most willing.

Then the oath of coronation, as it is contained in the eighth act of the first parliament of king James, being read by the lion, the tenor whereof followeth:

"Because that the increase of virtue, and suppressing of idolatry, craveth, that the prince and the people be of one perfect religion; which of God's mercy is now presently professed within this realm: therefore it is statuted and ordained, by our sovereign lord, my lord regent, and three estates of this present parliament: that all kings, princes, and magistrates whatsoever, holding their place, which hereafter at any time shall happen to reign, and

bear rule over this realm, at the time of their coronation, and receipt of their princely authority, make their faithful promise, in the presence of the eternal God; that, enduring the whole course of their lives, they shall serve the same eternal God to the uttermost of their power, according as He hath required in His most holy Word, revealed and contained in the New and Old Testaments; and, according to the same words, shall maintain the true religion of Christ Jesus, the preaching of His holy Word, and due and right ministration of the sacraments now received and preached within this realm: and shall abolish and gainstand all false religions, contrary to the same: and shall rule the people committed to their charge, according to the will and command of God, revealed in His foresaid Word, and according to the loveable laws and constitutions received in this realm, no ways repugnant to the said Word of the eternal God; and shall procure to the uttermost of their power, to the kirk of God and whole Christian people, true and perfect peace, in time coming. The rights and rents, with all just privileges of the crown of Scotland, to preserve and keep inviolated: neither shall they transfer, nor alienate the same. They shall forbid and repress, in all estates and degrees, rife oppression, and all kind of wrong: in all judgments they shall command and procure that justice and equity be keeped to all creatures, without exception, as the Lord and Father of Mercies, be merciful unto them: and out of their lands and empire they shall be careful to root all heretics, and enemies to the true worship of God, that shall be convict by the true kirk of God, of the foresaid crimes; and that they shall faithfully affirm the things above written by their solemn oath."

The minister tendered the oath unto the king, who, kneeling and holding up his right hand, swore in these words, "By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and

reigneth for ever, I shall observe and keep all that is contained in this Oath."

This done, the king's majesty sat down in his chair and reposeth himself a little.

Then the king riseth from his chair, and is disrobed by the lord great chamberlain, of the princely robe wherewith he entered the kirk, and is invested by the said chamberlain, in his royal robes.

Thereafter, the king being brought to the chair on the north side of the kirk, supported as formerly; the sword was brought by Sir William Cockburn of Langtown, gentleman usher from the table, and delivered to lion king of arms; who giveth it to the lord great constable, who putteth the same in the king's hand, saying, "Sir, receive this kingly sword, for the defence of the faith of Christ, and protection of His kirk, and of the true religion, as it is presently professed within this kingdom, and according to the national covenant and league and covenant, and for executing equity and justice, and for punishment of all iniquity and injustice."

This done, the great constable receiveth the sword from the king, and girdeth the same about his side.

Thereafter, the king sitteth down in his chair, and then the spurs were put on him by the earl Marshall.

Thereafter, Archibald, Marquiss of Argyle, having taken the crown in his hands, the minister prayed, to this purpose:

"That the Lord would purge the crown from the sins and transgressions of them that did reign before him; that it might be a pure crown; that God would settle the crown upon the king's head: and, since men that set it on were not able to settle it, that the Lord would put it on, and preserve it." And then the said Marquiss put the crown on the king's head.

Which done, the lion king of arms, the great constable standing by him, causeth an herald to call the whole noblemen, one by one, according to their ranks, who, coming

before the king, kneeling, and with their hand touching the crown on the king's head, swore these words, "By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever; I shall support thee to my uttermost." And when they had done, then all the nobility held up their hands and "swore to be loyal and true subjects, and faithful to the crown."

The earl Marshall, with the lion, going to the four corners of the stage, the lion proclaimeth the obligatory oath of the people; and the people, holding up their hands all the time, did swear, "By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, we become your liege men, and truth and faith shall bear unto you, and live and die with you against all manner of folks whatsoever, in your service, according to the National Covenant, and Solemn League and Covenant."

Then did the earls and viscounts put on their crowns, and the lion likewise put on his. Then did the lord chamberlain loose the sword wherewith the king was girded, and drew it, and delivered it drawn into the king's hands; and the king put it into the hands of the great constable, to carry it naked before him. Then John, earl of Crawford and Lindsay, took the sceptre, and put it in the king's right hand, saying, "Sir, receive this sceptre, the sign of royal power of the kingdom, that you may govern yourself right, and defend all the Christian people committed by God to your charge, punishing the wicked, and protecting the just."

Then did the king ascend the stage, attended by the officers of the crown, and nobility, and was installed in the royal throne by Archibald, Marquiss of Argyle, saying, "Stand, and hold fast from henceforth the place whereof you are the lawful and righteous heir, by a long and lineal succession of your fathers, which is new delivered unto you by authority of Almighty God."

When the king was set down upon the throne, the minister spoke to him a word of exhortation as followeth.

"Sir, you are set down upon the throne in a very difficult time, I shall therefore put you in mind of a scriptural expression of a throne. "It is said, Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord." Sir, you are a king, and a king in covenant with the Lord; if you would have the Lord to own you to be His king, and your throne to be His throne, I desire you may have some thoughts of this expression.

1. "It is the Lord's throne. Remember you have a King above you, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who commandeth thrones. He setteth kings on thrones, and dethroneth them at His pleasure: therefore take a word of advice; be thankful to Him who hath brought you through many wanderings to set you upon this throne. Kiss the Son lest He be angry, and learn to serve Him with fear who is terrible to the kings of the earth.

2. "Your throne is the Lord's throne, and your people the Lord's people: let not your heart be lifted up above your brethren. They are your brethren, not only flesh of your flesh, but brethren by covenant with God. Let your government be refreshing unto them as the rain upon the mown grass.

3. "Your throne is the Lord's throne. Beware of making His throne a throne of iniquity: there is such a throne, which frameth mischief by a law; God will not own such a throne, it hath no fellowship with Him. Sir, there is too much iniquity upon the throne by your predecessors, who framed mischief by a law, such laws as have been destructive to religion, and grievous to the Lord's people; you are on the throne, and have the sceptre, beware of touching mischievous laws therewith: but, as the throne is the Lord's throne, let the laws be the Lord's laws, agreeable to His word, such as are terrible to evil-doers, and comfortable to

the godly, and a relief to the poor and oppressed in the land.

4. "The Lord's throne putteth you in mind whom you should have about the throne. Wicked counsellors are not for a king upon the Lord's throne; Solomon knew this, who said, 'Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness:' and 'A king upon the throne scattereth away all evil with his eyes.'

5. "The Lord's throne putteth you in mind, that the judgment on the throne should be the Lord's. Take the exhortation, 'Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne, thou and thy servants and thy people, execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressors, and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David. But, if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation.' And 'I will prepare destroyers against thee.'

"Sir, destroyers are prepared for the injustice of the throne. I entreat you to execute righteous judgment, if ye do it not, your house will be a desolation; but, if ye do that which is right, God shall remove the destroyers: and you shall be established on your throne; and there shall yet be dignity in your house, for your servants, and for your people.

"Lastly, If your throne be the throne of the Lord, take a word of encouragement against throne adversaries. Your enemies are the enemies of the Lord's throne: make your peace with God in Christ, and the Lord shall scatter your enemies from the throne; and He shall magnify you yet in the sight of these nations, and make the misled people submit themselves willingly to your government.

"Sir, If you use well the Lord's throne on which you are set, then the two words in the place cited, spoken of Solomon sitting on the throne of the Lord, 'He prospered and all Israel obeyed him,' shall belong unto you; your people shall obey you in the Lord, and you shall prosper in the sight of the nations round about."

Then the lord chancellor went to the four corners of the stage, the lion king of arms going before him, and proclaimed his majesty's free pardon to all breakers of penal statutes, and made offer thereof: whereupon the people cried, "God save the king."

Then the king, supported by the great constable and marshall, and accompanied with the chancellor, arose from the throne, and went out at a door prepared for the purpose, to a stage: and sheweth himself to the people without, who clapped their hands, and cried with a loud voice a long time, "God save the king."

Then, the king returning, and sitting down upon the throne, delivered the sceptre to the Earl of Crawford and Lindsay, to be carried before him: thereafter the lion king of arms rehearsed the royal line of the kings upward to Fergus the First.

Then the lion called the lords one by one who, kneeling and holding their hands betwixt the king's hands, did swear these words, "By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, I do become your liege man, and truth and faith shall bear unto you, and live and die with you, against all manner of folks whatsoever in your service, according to the National Covenant and Solemn League and Covenant."

And every one of them kissed the king's left cheek.

When these solemnities were ended, the minister, standing before the king on his throne, pronounced this blessing:

"The Lord bless thee, and save thee; the Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend

thee; the Lord send thee help from the sanctuary and strengthen thee out of Zion. Amen."

After the blessing was pronounced, the minister went to the pulpit and had the following exhortation, the king sitting still upon the throne.

Ye have this day a king crowned, and entered into covenant with God and His people; look, both king and people, that ye keep this covenant; and beware of the breach of it. That ye may be the more careful to keep it, I will lay a few things before you.

I remember when the Solemn League and Covenant was entered into by both nations. The commissioners from England being present in the East kirk of Edinburgh, a passage was cited out of Nehemiah, which I shall now again cite. Nehemiah requireth an oath of the nobles and people, to restore the mortgaged lands, which they promise to do: after the oath was tendered, he did shake his lap, and said, "So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen."

Since that time, many of those who were in the covenant, are shaken out of it; yea, they have shaken off the covenant, and laid it aside. It is true, they are prospering this day, and think that they prosper, by laying aside the covenant; but they will be deceived. That word spoken then shall not fall to the ground; God shall shake them out of their possession, and empty them for their perfidious breach of the covenant.

The same I say to king and nobles, and all that are in covenant; if you break that covenant, being so solemnly sworn, all these who have touched your crown, and sworn to support it, shall not be able to hold it on; but God will shake it off, and turn you from the throne: and ye noblemen, who are assistant to the putting on of the crown, and

setting the king upon the throne, if ye shall either assist, or advise the king to break the covenant, and overturn the work of God, He shall shake you out of your possessions, and empty you of all your glory.

Another passage I offer to your serious consideration. After that Zedekiah had promised to proclaim liberty to all the Lord's people, who were servants, and entered into a covenant, he and his princes let them go free, and according to the oath had let them go; afterwards they caused the servants to return, and brought them into subjection. What followeth upon this breach? "Ye were now turned, and had done right in My sight, in proclaiming liberty; but ye turned, and made them servants again." And therefore, "I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant, which they made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof; I will even give them into the hands of their enemies, into the hand of them that seek their life, even Zedekiah and his princes."

If the breach of the covenant made for the liberty of servants was so punished, what shall be the punishment of the breach of a covenant for religion, and the liberty of the people of God? There is nothing more terrible to kings and princes than to be given into the hand of enemies that seek their life: if ye would escape this judgment, let kings and princes keep their covenant made with God: your enemies who seek your life, are in the land; if ye break the covenant, it may be feared God will give you over unto them as a prey: but, if ye keep the covenant, it may be expected God will keep you out of their hands.

Let not the place ye heard opened, be forgotten, for in it ye have an example of divine justice against Joash and the princes, for breaking that covenant. The princes who enticed to that breach, are destroyed: and it is said, "The army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the

Lord delivered a very great host into their hand; because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers: so they executed judgment against Joash. "His own servants conspired against him and slew him on his bed."

The conspiracy of servants or subjects against their king is a wicked course: but God in His righteous judgment suffereth subjects to conspire and rebel against their princes, because they rebel against God: and He suffereth subjects to break the covenant made with a king, because he breaketh the covenant made with God. I may say freely, that a chief cause of the judgment upon the king's house hath been the grandfather's breach of covenant with God, and the father's following his steps in opposing the work of God, and His kirk within these kingdoms; they broke covenant with God, and men have broken covenant with them: yea, most cruelly and perfidiously have invaded the royal family and trodden upon all princely dignity.

Be wise by their example: you are now sitting upon the throne of the kingdom, and your nobles about you. There is One above you, even Jesus, the King of Zion; and I as His servant, dare not but be free with you: I charge you, Sir, in His name, that you keep this covenant in all points; if you shall break this covenant and come against His cause, I assure you the controversy is not ended between God and your family: but will be carried on to the further weakening, if not the overthrow of it: but if you shall keep this covenant, and befriend the kingdom of Christ, it may be from this day God shall begin to do you good. Although your estate be very weak, God is able to raise you, and make you reign, maugre the opposition of all your enemies: and howsoever it shall please the Lord to dispose, you shall have peace toward God, through Christ the Mediator.

As for you who are nobles and peers of the land, your share is great in this day of coronation; ye have come and

touched the crown, and sworn to support it: ye have handled the sword and the sceptre, and have set down the king upon his throne.

1. I charge you to keep your covenant with God; and see that ye never be moved yourselves to come against it in any head, or article thereof; and that ye give no counsel to the king to come against the doctrine, worship, government and discipline of the kirk, established in this land, as ye would eschew the judgment of covenant-breakers. If the king and ye who are engaged to support the crown, conspire together against the kingdom of Christ, both ye that do support and he that is supported will fall together. I press this the more, because it is a rare thing to see a king and great men for Christ. In the long catalogue of the kings, which ye have heard recited this day, they will be found few who have been for Christ.

2. I charge you also, because of your many oaths to the king; that you keep them inviolable. Be faithful to him, according to your covenant. The oaths of God are upon you; if, directly or indirectly, ye do anything against his standing, God, by whom ye have sworn, will be avenged upon you for the breach of His oath.

And now, I will shut up all with one word more to you. Sir, you are the only covenanted king with God and His people in the world; many have obstructed your entry in it: now, seeing the Lord hath brought you in over all these obstructions, only observe to do what is contained therein; and it shall prove an happy time for you and your house. And because you are entered in times of great difficulty, wherein small strength seemeth to remain with you in the eyes of the world, for recovering your just power and greatness; therefore take the counsel which David when he was dying gave to his son Solomon, "Be strong, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God; to walk in His ways, and keep His

commandments ; that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself."

After this exhortation, the minister closed the whole action with prayer ; and, Psalm xx. being sung, he dismissed the people with the blessing.

Then did the king's majesty descend from the stage with the crown upon his head ; and, receiving again the sceptre in his hand, returned with the whole train, in a solemn manner, to his palace, the sword being carried before him.

THE ACTS RESCISSORY.

FIRST PARLIAMENT OF CHARLES II.

JANUARY, 1661.—7.—"*Act concerning the League and Covenant and discharging the renewing thereof without his Majesties Warrand and approbation.*

"FORASMUCH as the power of Armes, and entering into, and making of Leagues and Bonds, is an undoubted privilege of the Crown, and a proper part of the Royal Prerogative of the Kings of this Kingdom, and that in recognisance of His Majesties just Right, the Estates of Parliament of this His most ancient Kingdom of Scotland, have declared it high Treason to the Subjects thereof, of whatsoever number, lesse or more, upon any pretext whatsoever, to rise, or continue in Armes, or to enter into Leagues and Bonds, with Forraigners, or among themselves, without His Majesties special Warrand and Approbation, had and obtained thereto, and have Rescinded and Annulled all Acts of Parliament, Conventions of Estates, or other Deeds whatsoever, contrary to, or inconsistent with the same ; And whereas during these troubles, there have occurred divers things, in the making and pursuance of Leagues and Bonds, which

may be occasion of jealousie in and betwixt his Majesties Dominions of Scotland, England, and Ireland. Therefore and for preventing of all scruples, mistakes or jealousies that may hereafter arise upon these grounds, The King's Majesty with advice and consent of His Estates of Parliament, doth hereby Declare, that there is no Obligation upon this Kingdom by Covenant, Treaties or otherwise, to endeavour by Armes a Reformation of Religion in the Kingdom of England, or to meddle with the publick Government and Administration of that Kingdom. And the King's Majesty with advice and consent foresaid, doth Declare, That the League and Covenant, and all Treaties following thereupon, and Acts or Deeds that do, or may relate thereto, are not obligatory, nor do infer any obligation upon this Kingdom, or the Subjects thereof, to meddle or interpose by Armes, or any seditious way, in any thing concerning the Religion and Government of the Churches of England and Ireland, or in what may concern the Administration of His Majesties Government there. And further, His Majesty, with advice and consent of his Estates, doth hereby Discharge and Inhibite all His Majesties Subjects within this Kingdom, that none of them may presume upon any pretext of any Authority whatsoever, to require the renewing or swearing of the said League and Covenant, or of any other Covenants, or publick Oaths concerning the Government of the Church or Kingdom, without His Majesties special Warrand and Approbation; And that none of His Majesties Subjects offer to renew and swear the same, without His Majesties Warrand, as said is, as they will be answerable at their highest peril."

SAME PARLIAMENT.—*15.*—"*Act Rescinding and Annulling the pretended parliaments in the years 1640, 1641, etc.*

"The Estates of Parliament, considering that the Peace and Happiness of this Kingdom, and of His Majesties good

subjects therein, doth depend upon the Safetie of His Majesties Person, and the maintenance of His Royal Authority, Power, and Greatness: And that all the miseries, confusions, and disorders which this Kingdom hath groaned under, these twenty-three years, have issued from, and been the necessarie and natural products of these neglects, contempts, and invasions, which, in and from the beginning of these troubles, were upon the specious (but false) pretexts of Reformation (the common cloak of all rebellions) offered unto the Sacred Person and Royal Authority of the King's Majesty, and His Royal Father of blessed memory. And notwithstanding, that by the Sacred Right, inherent to the Imperial Crown (which His Majesty holds immediatelie from God Almightie alone) and by the ancient constitution and fundamental Laws of the Kingdom; the power of convocating and keeping Assemblies of the Subjects: the power of Calling, Holding, Proroguing and Disolving of Parliaments, and making of Laws; the power of entering into Bonds, Covenants, Leagues and Treaties; the power of raising Armes, keeping of Strengths and Forts are Essential parts, and inseparable privileges of the Royal Authoritie and Prerogative of the Kings of this Kingdom: Yet, such hath been the madness and delusion of these times, that even Religion itself, which holds the Right of Kings to be Sacred and Inviolable, hath been pretended unto, for warrand of these injurious Violations and Incroachments, so publickly done and owned, upon and against His Majesties just Power, Authority and Government: By making and keeping of unlawful Meetings and Convocations of the People; By entering into Covenants, Treaties and Leagues; By seizing upon, and possessing themselves of His Majesties Castles, Forts and Strengths of the Kingdom: and by Holding of Pretended Parliaments, making of Laws, and raising of Armes for the maintaining of the same; and that not only without warrand, but contrary to His Majesties express

Commands. And although the late King's Majesty, out of His meer grace and respects to this His native Kingdom, and the peace and quiet of His people, and for preventing the consequences which such bad example and practice might occasion, to the disturbance of the peace of his other Kingdoms, was pleased in the year, one thousand six hundred and forty one, to come into this Countrey, and by his own presence, at their pretended Parliaments and other wayes, to comply with, and give way to, many things neerly concerning the undoubted Interest and Prerogative of the Crown. expecting that such unparalleled Condescentions should have made His Subjects ashamed of their former miscariages, and the very thoughts thereof, to be hatefull to them and their posteritie for ever. Yet, such was the prevalencie of the spirit of Rebelion that raged in manie for the time, that not content with that peace and happiness which, even above their desires, was secured to them: nor of these manie Grants of honour and profit, by which His Majestie endeavoured to endear the most desperat of them to their duty and obedience, they then, when His Majesty had not left unto them anie pretence or shaddow of anie new desire to be proposed, either concerning themselves or the Kingdom, did most unworthilie engage to subvert His Majesties Government, and the publick peace of the Kingdom of England: For which purpose, having joined in a League with some there, they, for the better prosecution of the same, did assume unto themselves the Royal Power, kept and held Parliaments at their pleasure; by the pretended Authoritie of which, they laid new exactions upon the people (which in one month did far exceed what ever by the Kings Authoritie had been raised in a whole year) levied Armes, sent out Edicts, requiring obedience unto their unlawful demands; and with all manner of violence pursued such as out of duty to His Majesties Authoritie opposed them by fines, confinements, imprisonment, banishment, death, and

forfeiture of their property; and with their Armie thus raised, invaded His Majesties Kingdom of England, and joyned with such as were in Arms against His Majestie there. And thus maintaining their usurped power, and violently executing the same against all Law, Conscience, Honour and Humanity, have made themselves instruments of much loss, shame and dishonour to their native Countrey, and have justly forfeited anie favour they might have pretended to, from His Majesties former concessions. And forasmuch as now it hath pleased Almighty God, by the power of His own right hand, so miraculously to restore the Kings Majestie to the Government of his Kingdoms, and to the exercise of His Royal Power, and Soveraigntie over the same, The Estates of Parliament do conceive themselves obliged, in discharge of their dutie and conscience to GOD and the Kings Majestie, to imploy all their Power and interest, for vindicating His Majesties Authoritie from all these violent invasions that have been made upon it, and so far as possible to remove out of the way everything that may retain anie remembrance of these things, which have been so injurious to His Majestie and His Authoritie, so predjudicial and dishonourable to the Kingdom, and destructive to all just and true interests within the same. And considering that, besides the unlawfulness of the Publick Actings during the troubles, most of the Acts in all and every of the Meetings of these pretended Parliaments, do highly encroach upon, and are destructive of that Sovereign Power, Authority, Prerogative, and Right of Government, which by the law of GOD, and the ancient Laws and Constitutions of this Kingdom, doth reside in, and belong unto, the Kings Majestie, and do reflect upon the honour, loyaltie, and reputation of this Kingdom; or are expired, and serve only as testimonies of disloyaltie and reproach upon the Kingdom, and are unfit to be any longer upon Record. Therefore the Kings Majestie and Estates of

Parliament do hereby Rescind and Annull the pretended Parliaments, kept in the years one thousand six hundred and fourty, one thousand six hundred and fourty one, one thousand six hundred and fourty four, one thousand six hundred and fourty five, one thousand six hundred and fourty six, one thousand six hundred and fourty seven, and one thousand six hundred and fourty eight, and all Acts and Deeds past and done in them, and Declares the same to be henceforth void and null. And His Majesty, being unwilling to take any advantage of the failings of His Subjects during these unhappy times, is resolved not to retain any remembrance thereof, but that the same shall be held in everlasting oblivion: and that all difference and animosities be forgotten, His good subjects may in a happy union, under His Royal Government, enjoy that happiness and peace, which His Majestie intends, and really wisheth unto them as unto himself, doth therefore, by advice and consent of His Estates of Parliament, grant His full assurance and indemnity to all persons that acted in, or by virtue of the said pretended Parliaments, and other Meetings flowing from the same, to be unquestioned in their Lives or Fortunes, or any Deed or Deeds done by them in their said usurpation, or by virtue of any pretended Authority derived therefrom, excepting alwayes such as shall be excepted in a general Act of Indemnity, to be past by His Majestie in this Parliament. And it is hereby declared that all Acts, Rights and Securities, past in any of the pretended Meetings above written, or by virtue thereof, in favours of any particular persons for their civil and private interests shall stand good and valid unto them, untill the same be taken into further consideration, and determined in this, or the next Session of this Parliament."

SECOND SESSION OF FIRST PARLIAMENT OF CHARLES II.

EDINBURGH, MAY, 1662.—*Act for preservation of His Majesties Person, Authority and Government.*

THE Estates of Parliament, taking into their consideration the miseries, confusions, bondage and oppressions, this Kingdom hath groaned under since the year, one thousand six hundred and thirty seven years, with the causes and occasions thereof: Do, with all humble duty and thankfulness, acknowledge His Majesties unparrallel'd grace and goodness, in passing by the many miscarriages of His Subjects, and restoring the Church and State to their ancient Liberties, Freedom, Rights and Possessions; and the great Obligations thereby lying upon them to express all possible care and zeal in the preservation of His Majesties person, (in whose honour and happinesse consisteth the good and welfare of His people) and in the security and establishment of His Royal Authority and Government, against all such wicked attempts and practices for the time to come. And, since the rise and progress of the late troubles did, in a great measure, proceed from some treasonable and seditious positions infused into the people. That it was lawfull to Subjects for Reformation, to enter into Covenants and Leagues, or to take up Arms against the King, or those Commissionated by Him, and such-like: And that many Wilde and rebellious courses were taken and practised in pursuance thereof, by unlawful meetings and gatherings of the people, by mutinous and tumultuous petitions, by insolent and seditious Protestations against His Majesties Royal and just commands, by entering into unlawfull Oaths and Covenants, by usurping the name and power of Council Tables and Church Judicatories, after they were by His Majesty discharged, by treasonable Declarations, that His Majesty was not to be

admitted to the exercise of His Royal power, untill He should grant their unjust desires and approve their wicked practices, by rebellions rising in Arms against His Majestie and such as had Commission from Him; And by the great countenance, allowance and encouragement given to these pernicious courses by the multitude of seditious Sermons, Libels, and Discourses, preached, printed and published in defence thereof: And considering that as the present age is not full freed of those distempers; so posterity may be apt to relapse therein, if timous remeed be not provided. Therefore the King's Majestie and Estates of Parliament do Declare that these positions, That it is lawfull to Subjects, upon pretence of Reformation, or other pretence whatsoever, to enter into Leagues and Covenants, or to take up arms against the King; or that it is lawfull to subjects, pretending His Majestys Authority, to take up Arms against His person or those Commissionated by Him, or to suspend Him from the exercise of his Royal Government, or to put limitations upon their due obedience and allegiance, Are Rebellious and Treasonable, And that all these Gatherings, Convocations, Petitions, Protestations, and Erecting and keeping of Council-tables, that were used in the beginning, and for carrying on, of the late troubles, were unlawful and seditious: And particularly, that these Oaths, whereof the one was commonly called The National Covenant, (as it was sworn and explained in the year one thousand, six hundred and thirty-eight, and thereafter) and the other entituled, A Solemn League and Covenant, were, and are in themselves unlawful Oaths, and were taken by, and imposed upon, the Subjects of this Kingdom, against the fundamental laws and liberties of the same; and that there lyeth no obligation upon any of the Subjects from the saids Oaths, or either of them, to endeavour any change or alteration of Government either in Church or State; And therefore Annuls all Acts and Constitutions, Ecclesiastical or Civil, approving the said

pretended National Covenant or League and Covenant, or making any interpretations of the same or either of them. And also, it is hereby Declared by His Majesty and Estates of Parliament, That the pretended assemblie kept at Glasgow in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty eight, was in itself (after the same was by His Majestie discharged, under the pain of Treason) an unlawfull and seditious Meeting; and that all Acts, Deeds, Sentences, Orders, or Decreets past therein, or by vertue of any pretended Authority from the same, were in themselves from the beginning, are now, and in all time coming, to be reputed unlawful, void and null; And that all Ratifications or Confirmations of the same, past by whatsoever Authority or in whatsoever Meetings, shall from henceforth be void and null. Like-as, His Majesty and Estates of Parliament, reflecting on the sad consequences of these rebellious courses, and being carefull to prevent the like for the future, have therefore Statute and Ordained, and by these presents Statutes and Ordains, that if any person or persons shall hereafter Plot, contrive or intend destruction to the King's Majesty, or any bodily harm tending to death or destruction, or any restraint upon his Royal Person, or to deprive, depose, or suspend Him from the stile, Honour and Kingly Name of the Imperial Crown of this Realm, or any others His Majesties Dominions, or to suspend him from the exercise of His Royal Government, or to levy War or take up Arms against His Majesty or any commissionated by Him, or shall entice any strangers or others to invade any of His Majesties Dominions; and shall by writing, printing, preaching or other malicious and advised speaking, express or declare such their Treasonable intentions, every such person or persons, being upon sufficient probation legally convicted thereof, shall be deemed, declared and adjudged Traitors, and shall suffer forfeiture of life, honour, lands, and goods as in cases of high Treason. And further, it is by His Majesty

and Estates of Parliament Declared, Statute and Enacted, That if any person or persons shall, by Writing, Printing, Praying, Preaching, Libelling, Remonstrating, or by any malicious and advised speaking, express, publish, or declare any words or sentences to stir up the people to the hatred or dislike of His Majesties Royal Prerogative and Supremacy in causes Ecclesiastick, or of the Government of the Church by Archbishops and Bishops as it is now settled by Law, or to Justifie any of the deeds, actings, practices or things above-mentioned and declared against by this present Act: that every such person or persons so offending, and being, as said is, Legally convicted thereof, are hereby declared incapable to enjoy or exerce any place or imployment, Civil, Ecclesiastical, or Military, within this Church and Kingdom, and shall be lyable to such further pains as are due by the Law in such cases; Provided alwayes, that no person be processed for any of the offences aforesaid, contained in this Act, (other than these that are declared to be high Treason) unless it be by order from His Majesty, or by order of His Privy Council for the time; neither shall they incur any of the penalties above-mentioned, unless they be pursued within eight Months after the offence committed, and sentenced thereupon within four Months after the intenting of the Process. And it is also Declared, that if His Majesty grant His pardon to any person convicted for any of the offences contained in this present Act; after such pardon, the party pardoned shall be restored to all intents and purposes, as if he had never been pursued nor convicted any thing in this Act to the contrary, notwithstanding.

THE TORWOOD EXCOMMUNICATION.*

After public worship, Mr. CARGILL proceeded thus :—

WE have now spoken of excommunication, of the nature, subject, causes, and ends thereof. We shall now proceed to the action itself, being constrained by the conscience of our duty, and by zeal for God, to excommunicate some of those who have been the committers of such great crimes, and authors of the great mischiefs of Britain and Ireland, but especially those of Scotland. In doing this, we shall keep the names by which they are ordinarily called, that they may be better known.

I, being a minister of Jesus Christ, and having authority and power from Him, do, in His name and by His Spirit, excommunicate and cast out of the true Church, and deliver up to Satan, Charles II., king, etc., and that upon the account of these wickednesses :—

1st, For his high contempt of God, in regard that after he had acknowledged his owu sins, his father's sins, his mother's idolatry, and had solemnly engaged against them in a declaration at Dunfermline, the 16th of August, 1650, he hath, notwithstanding all this, gone on more avowedly in these sins than all that went before him.

2ndly, For his great perjury in regard that, after he had twice at least solemnly subscribed that covenant, he did so presumptuously renounce, and disown, and command it to be burnt by the hands of the hangman.

3rdly, Because he hath rescinded all the laws for establishing that religion and reformation engaged unto in that covenant, and enacted laws for establishing its contrary ;

* At Torwood, Stirlingshire, September 1660, Donald Cargill pronounced this sentence of Excommunication against Charles II. ; the Dukes of York, Monmouth, Lauderdale, and Rothes ; Sir George M'Kenzie, the King's Advocate ; and Dalziell of Binns.

and also is still working for the introduction of Popery into these lands. And

4thly, For commanding armies to destroy the Lord's people, who were standing in their own just defence, and for their privileges and rights, against tyranny, and oppression and injuries of men, and for the blood he hath shed on fields, and scaffolds, and seas, of the people of God, upon account of religion and righteousness (they being willing in all other things to render him obedience, if he had reigned and ruled according to his covenant and oath), more than all the kings that have been before him in Scotland.

5thly, That he hath been still an enemy to, and persecutor of, the true Protestants; a favourer and helper of the Papists, both at home and abroad; and hath, to the utmost of his power, hindered the due execution of the laws against them.

6thly, For his bringing guilt upon the kingdom, by his frequent grants of remissions and pardons to murderers (though it is in the power of no king to pardon murder, being expressly contrary to the law of God), an indulgence which is the only way to embolden men to commit murders, to the defiling of the land with blood. And

Lastly, To pass by all other things, his great and dreadful uncleanness of adultery and incest, his drunkenness, his dissembling both with God and men, and performing his promises, where his engagements were sinful. Next,

By the same authority, and in the same name, I excommunicate and cast out of the true Church, and deliver up unto Satan, James, Duke of York, and that for his idolatry (for I shall not speak of any other sin but what hath been perpetrated by him in Scotland), and for setting up idolatry in Scotland to defile the Lord's land, and for his enticing and encouraging to do so. Next,

In the same name, and by the same authority, I excommunicate and cast out of the true Church, and deliver up unto Satan, James, Duke of Monmouth, for coming unto

Scotland at his father's unjust command, and leading armies against the Lord's people, who were constrained to rise, being killed in and for the worshipping of the true God, and for refusing, that morning, a cessation of arms at Bothwell Bridge, for hearing and redressing their injuries, wrongs and oppressions. Next,

I do, by virtue of the same authority, and in the same name, excommunicate and cast out of the true Church, and deliver up unto Satan, John, Duke of Lauderdale, for his dreadful blasphemy, especially for that word to the Prelate of St. Andrews, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool;" his atheistical drolling on the Scriptures of God, and scoffing at religion and religious persons; his apostasy from the covenants and reformation, and his persecuting thereof, after he had been a professor, pleader, and presser thereof: for his perjury in the business of Mr. James Mitchell, who being in Council gave public faith that he should be indemnified, and that, to life and limb, if he would confess his attempt on the Prelate; and notwithstanding this, before the Justiciary Court, did give his oath that there was no such act in Council; for his adultery and uncleanness; for his counselling and assisting the king in all his tyrannies, overturning and plotting against the true religion; for his gaming on the Lord's day, and lastly for his usual and ordinary swearing. Next,

I do, by virtue of the same authority, and in the same name, excommunicate, cast out of the true Church, and deliver up to Satan, John, Duke of Rothes, for his perjury in the matter of Mr. James Mitchell; for his adulteries and uncleanness; for his allotting of the Lord's day to his drunkenness; for his professing and avowing his readiness and willingness to set up Popery in this land at the king's command; and for the heathenish, and barbarous and unheard of cruelty (whereof he was the chief author, contriver, and commander, notwithstanding his having engaged

otherwise), to that worthy gentleman, David Hackstoun of Rathillet, and lastly, for his ordinary cursing, swearing, and drunkenness. And,

I do, by virtue of the same authority, and in the same name, excommunicate, and cast out of the true Church and deliver up to Satan, Sir George M'Kenzie, the King's Advocate, for his apostasy in turning into a profligacy of conversation, after he had begun a profession of holiness; for his constant pleading against, and persecuting unto the death, the people of God, and for alleging and laying to their charge things which in his conscience he knew to be against the word of God, truth and right reason, and the ancient laws of this kingdom; for his pleading for sorcerers, murderers, and other criminals, that before God and by the laws of the land ought to die, and for his ungodly, erroneous, fantastic, and blasphemous tenets printed in his pamphlets and pasquils. And,

Lastly, I do by virtue of the same authority, and in the same name, excommunicate, and cast out of the true Church, and deliver up to Satan, Dalziell of Binns, for his leading armies, and commanding the killing, robbing, pillaging and oppressing of the Lord's people, and free subjects of this kingdom; for executing lawless tyrannies and lustful laws; for his commanding to shoot one Findlay at a post at Newmills, without any form of law, civil or military (he not being guilty of anything which they themselves accounted a crime); for his lewd and impious life, led in adultery and uncleanness from his youth, with a contempt for marriage, which is an ordinance of God; for all his atheistical and irreligious conversation, and lastly, for his unjust usurping and retaining of the estate of that worthy gentleman, William Mure of Caldwell, and his other injurious deeds in the exercise of his power.

Now I think, none that acknowledge the word of God, can judge these sentences to be unjust; yet some, it may be,

to flatter the powers, will call them disorderly and informal, there not being warning given, nor probation led. But for answer: there has been warning given, if not with regard to all these, at least with regard to a great part of them. And, for probation, there needs none, their deeds being notour and public, and the most of them such as themselves do avow and boast of. And as the causes are just, so, being done by a minister of the Gospel, and in such a way as the present persecution would admit of, the sentence is just, and there is no king, nor minister on earth, without repentance of the persons, can lawfully reverse these sentences upon any such account. God being the Author of these ordinances to the ratifying of them, all that acknowledge the Scriptures of truth, ought to acknowledge them. Yet perchance, some will think that though they be not unjust, yet that they are foolishly rigorous. We shall answer nothing to this, but that word which we speak with much more reason than they that first used it, "Should he deal with our sister, as with an harlot?" Should they deal with our God as an idol? Should they deal with His people as murderers and malefactors, and we not draw out His sword against them?

ACT AGAINST CONVENTICLES.*

Forasmuch as the assembling and convocating of his majesty's subjects, without his majesty's warrant and authority, is a most dangerous and unlawful practice, prohibit and discharged by several laws and acts of parliament, under high and great pains: and that notwithstanding thereof, diverse disaffected and seditious persons,

*There were several acts for the suppression of field preachings. This one was prepared by Archbishop Sharpe and issued in 1670.

under the specious but false pretences of religion and religious exercises, presume to make, and be present at conventicles and unwarrantable meetings and conventions of the subjects, which are the ordinary seminaries of separation and rebellion, tending to the prejudice of the public worship of God in the churches, to the scandal of the reformed religion, to the reproach of his majesty's authority and government, and to the alienating of the hearts and affections of the subjects from that duty and obedience they owe to his majesty, and the public laws of kingdom. For the suppressing and preventing of which for the time to come, his majesty, with advice and consent of his estates of parliament, hath thought fit to statute and enact, likeas they do hereby statute and command, that no outed ministers who are not licensed by the council, and no other persons not authorized, or tolerate by the bishop of the diocese, presume to preach, expound scripture, or pray in any meeting, except in their own houses, and to those of their own family; and that none be present at any meeting, without the family to which they belong, where any not licensed, authorized, nor tolerate as said is, shall preach, expound scripture, or pray: declaring hereby, all such who shall do in the contrary, to be guilty of keeping of conventicles; and that he, or they, who shall so preach, expound, or pray, within any house, shall be seized upon and imprisoned, till they find caution, under the pain of five thousand merks, not to do the like thereafter, or else enact themselves to remove out of the kingdom, and never return without his majesty's license; and that every person who shall be found to have been present at any such meetings, shall be *toties quoties*, fined according to their qualities, in the respective sums following, and imprisoned until they pay their fines, and further, during the council's pleasure, viz., each man or woman, having land in heritage, life-rent, or proper wadset, to be fined in a fourth part of his or her valued yearly rent;

each tenant labouring land, in twenty-five pounds Scots; each cottar, in twelve pounds Scots, and each serving man, in a fourth part of his yearly fee: and where merchants or tradesmen do not belong to, or reside within burghs royal, that each merchant or chief tradesman be fined as a tenant, and each inferior tradesman as a cottar: and if any of the persons above-mentioned shall have their wives, or any of their children living in family with them, present at any such meeting, they are therefore to be fined in the half of the respective fines aforesaid, consideration being had to their several qualities and conditions. And if the master or mistress of any family, where any such meetings shall be kept, be present within the house for the time, they are to be fined in the double of what is to be paid by them, for being present at a house conventicle. And it is hereby declared, that magistrates of burghs royal are liable, for every conventicle to be kept within their burghs, to such fines as his majesty's council shall think fit to impose: and that the master or mistress of the house where the conventicle shall happen to be kept, and the persons present thereat, are to relieve the magistrates, as the council shall think fit to order the same; it being notwithstanding free to the council to fine the inhabitants of burghs for being present at conventicles within or without burghs, or where their wives or children shall be present at the same.

And further, his majesty understanding that divers disaffected persons have been so maliciously wicked and disloyal, as to convocate his majesty's subjects to open meetings in the fields, expressly contrary to many public laws made thereanent, and considering that these meetings are the rendezvouses of rebellion, and tend in a high measure to the disturbance of the public peace, doth therefore, with advice and consent foresaid, statute and declare, that whosoever, without license or authority foresaid, shall preach, expound scripture, or pray, at any of those

meetings in the field, or in any house where there be more persons than the house contains, so as some of them be without doors (which is hereby declared to be a field conventicle) or who shall convocate any number of people to these meetings, shall be punished with death, and confiscation of their goods. And it is hereby offered and assured, that if any of his majesty's good subjects shall seize and secure the persons of any who shall either preach or pray at these field-meetings, or convocate any persons thereto, they shall, for every such person so seized and secured, have five hundred merks paid unto them for their reward, out of his majesty's treasury, by the commissioners thereof, who are hereby authorised to pay the same; and the said seizers and their assistants are hereby indemnified for any slaughter that shall be committed in the apprehending and securing of them. And, as to all heritors and others aforesaid, who shall be present at any of these field-conventicles, it is hereby declared, they are to be fined, *toties quoties*, in the double of the respective fines appointed for house conventicles; but prejudice of any other punishment due to them by law as seditious persons and disturbers of the peace and quiet of the kirk and kingdom.

And, seeing the due execution of laws is the readiest means to procure obedience to the same; therefore, his majesty, with consent and advice foresaid, doth empower, warrant, and command all sheriffs, stewarts of stewartries, lords of regalities, and their deputes, to call before them, and try all such persons who shall be informed to have kept, or been present at, conventicles within their jurisdictions, and to inflict upon these who shall be found guilty, the respective fines exprest in this act; they being always countable to the commissioners of his majesty's treasury, for the fines of all heritors within their bounds. And his majesty, for the encouragement of the said sheriffs, stewarts, and lords of regalities, to be careful and diligent in their

duties therein, doth allow to themselves all the fines of any persons within their jurisdictions, under the degree of heritors; and requires the lords of his majesty's privy council to take exact trial of their care and diligence herein; and if the sheriffs, stewarts, and bailiffs, be negligent in their duties, or if the magistrates within burghs shall be negligent in their utmost diligence, to detect and delate to the council all conventicles within their burghs, that the council inflict such censures and punishments upon them as they shall think fit. And the lords of his majesty's privy council are hereby required to be careful in the trial of all field and house-conventicles kept since the first day of October, one thousand six hundred and sixty-nine, and before the date hereof, and that they punish the same conform to the laws and acts of state formerly made thereanent. And lastly, his majesty, being hopeful that his subjects will give such cheerful obedience to the laws as there shall not be long use of this act, hath therefore, with advice foresaid, declared that the endurance thereof shall only be for three years, unless his majesty shall think fit that it continue longer.

THE SANQUHAR DECLARATION.*

It is not amongst the smallest of the Lord's mercies to this poor land that there have been always some who have given their testimony against every course of defection, (that many are guilty of) which is a token for good, that He doth not as yet intend to cast us off altogether, but that He will

* On June 22nd, 1680, this Declaration was read by Richard Cameron at Sanquhar, amid the breathless silence of the inhabitants who flocked to the spot. It marked "an epoch," writes Burton, "in the career of the Covenanters."

leave a remnant in whom He will be glorious, if they, through His grace, keep themselves clean still, and walk in His way and method, as it has been walked in and owned by Him in our predecessors of truly worthy memory, in their carrying on of our noble work of reformation in the several steps thereof, from popery, prelacy, and likewise Erastian supremacy, so much usurped by him, who (it is true so far as we know) is descended from the race of our kings. yet he hath so far deborded from what he ought to have been, by his perjury and usurpation in Church matters, and tyranny in matters civil, as is known by the whole land, that we have just reason to account it one of the Lord's great controversies against us, that we have not disowned him and the men of his practices, (whether inferior magistrates or any other) as enemies to our Lord and His crown, and the true Protestant and Presbyterian interest in thir lands, our Lord's espoused bride and Church. Therefore, although we be for government and governors such as the Word of our God and our Covenant allows, yet we for ourselves and all that will adhere to us as the representatives of the true Presbyterian Kirk and Covenanted nation of Scotland, considering the great hazard of lying under such a sin any longer, do by thir presents disown Charles Stuart, that has been reigning (or rather tyrannizing as we may say) on the throne of Britain these years bygone, as having any right, title to, or interest in, the said Crown of Scotland for government, as forfeited several years since, by his perjury and breach of covenant both to God and His Kirk, and usurpation of His crown and royal prerogatives therein, and many other breaches in matters ecclesiastic, and by his tyranny and breach of the very *leges regnandi* in matters civil. For which reason we declare, that several years since he should have been denuded of being king, ruler, or magistrate, or of having any power to act, or to be obeyed as such. As also, we, being under the standard of our Lord Jesus Christ, Captain of

Salvation, do declare a war with such a tyrant and usurper, and all the men of his practices, as enemies to our Lord Jesus Christ and His cause and covenants; and against all such as have strengthened him, sided with, or any wise acknowledged him in his tyranny, civil or ecclesiastic, yea, against all such as shall strengthen, side with, or any wise acknowledge any other in the like usurpation and tyranny, far more against such as would betray or deliver up our free reformed mother-kirk unto the bondage of anti-christ, the Pope of Rome. And by this we homologate that testimony given at Rutherglen, the 29th of May, 1679, and all the faithful testimonies of these who have gone before, as also of these who have suffered of late. And we do disclaim that Declaration published at Hamilton, June, 1679, chiefly because it takes in the king's interest, which we are several years since loosed from, because of the foresaid reasons, and others, which may after this (if the Lord will) be published. As also we disown, and by this resent the reception of the Duke of York, that professed papist, as repugnant to our principles and vows to the Most High God, and as that which is the great, though not alone, just reproach of our Kirk and nation. We also by this protest against his succeeding to the crown; and whatever has been done, or any are essaying to do in this land (given to the Lord), in prejudice to our work of reformation. And to conclude, we hope after this none will blame us for, or offend at our rewarding these that are against us as they have done to us as the Lord gives opportunity. This is not to exclude any that have declined, if they be willing to give satisfaction according to the degree of their offence.

Given at Sanquhar, June 22nd, 1680.

PROTESTATION AGAINST THE UNION.*

It will, no doubt, be reputed by many very unseasonable to protest at this time, against this Union, now so far advanced and by their law established; but the consideration of the superabundant, palpable and eminent sins, hazards, and destructions to religion, laws, and liberties that are in it, and natively attend it, is such a pressing motive, that we can do no less, for the exoneration of our consciences in shewing our dislike of the same, before the sitting down of the British Parliament, lest our silence should be altogether interpreted, either a direct or indirect owning of, or succumbing to the same: and though, having abundantly and plainly declared our principles formerly, and particularly in our last declaration, May 21, 1703, against the then intended Union; and waiting for more plain discovery of dissatisfaction with, and opposition unto this abominable course, by these of better capacitie, yet being herein so far disappointed in our expectations of such honourable and commendable appearances, for the laudable laws, and antient constitutions of this kingdom, both as to sacred and civil concerns, all these appearances, whither by addresses or protestations being so far lame and defective, as that the resolutions and purposes of such have never been fairly and freely remonstrat to the contrivers, promoters and establishers of this Union. The consideration of which, and the

* The faithful followers of the Reformers and Martyrs, who could not identify themselves with the Church and State at the Revolution, maintained their separate existence and testimony through their "Societies," and they prepared and published this paper against the Union with England. Its full title is "The Protestation and Testimony of the United Societies of the witnessing Remnant of the anti-Popish, anti-Prelatic, anti-Erastian, anti-Sectarian, true Presbyterian Church of Christ in Scotland, against the sinful incorporating Union with England and their British Parliament, concluded and established, May, 1707."

lamentable case and condition the land already is, and may be in, by reason of the same, hath moved us, after the example and in imitation of the cloud of witnesses who have gone before us, to protest against the same, as being contrar to the Word of God, and repugnant to our former Union with England in the terms of the Solemn League and Covenant.

And whereas it hath been the good will and pleasure of Almighty God, to grant unto this nation a glorious and blessed reformation of the true Christian religion, from the errors, idolatry, and superstition of popery and prelacy, and there withall to bless us with the power and purity of heavenly doctrine, worship, discipline, and government in the Church of God, according to His will revealed in the Holy Scriptures; and to let us have all this accompanyed and attended with many great and singular blessings, in the conversion and comfort of many thousands, and in reforming and purging the land from that gross ignorance, rudeness and barbarity, that once prevailed among us. Wherefore our zealous and worthy forefathers, being convinced of the benefit and excellency of such incomparable and unvaluable mercies, thought it their duty, not only by all means to endeavour the preservation of these, but also to transmit to posterity a fair *depositum* and copy in purity and integrity, and as a fit expedient and mean to accomplish and perfect the same, they entered into the National Covenant (no rank or degree of persons, from the highest to the lowest excepted) wherein they bound themselves to defend the reformation of religion in every part and point of the same, with their lives and fortunes to the outmost of their power, as may be seen in the National Covenant of this Church and kingdom, which was five times solemnly sworn.

Likeas the Lord was so pleased to bless our land, and to beautify it with His presence, that our neighbour nations of England and Ireland, who beheld this, and were groaning

under and likeways aiming at the removal and abolishing of popery and prelacy, had sought and obtained assistance from this nation to help them in their endeavours for that end, and had been owned of God with success, they likeways thought it fit to enter into a most Solemn League and Covenant with this Church and kingdom for reformation and defence of religion, wherein, with their hands lifted up to the most High God, they do bind and oblige themselves to maintain, preserve and defend, whatever measure and degree of reformation they had attained unto, and mutually to concurr, each with another with their lives and fortunes in their several places and callings, in opposition to all the enemies of the same, as may be seen at large in the Solemn League and Covenant. By means of which, these nations became (as it were) dedicated and devoted to God in a peculiar and singular manner, above all other people in the world and that by an indisolvable and indispensable obligation to perform, observe and fulfill the duties sworn too, and contained therein, from which no power on earth can absolve us. And so to prosecute and carry on the ends of the same, and to evidence our firm adherance to it, with the outmost of our endeavours, in opposition to every thing contradictory or contrar unto or exclusive of these our sacred vows. We have from time to time for these several years bypast, emitted and published several declarations and publick testimonies against the breaches of the same, as is evident not only from our declarations of late, but also from all the wrestlings and contendings of the faithful in former times, all which we here adhere to, approve of, and homologate, as they are founded upon the Word of God and are agreeable thereto.

And in this juncture to perpetuat and transmit to posterity the testimony of this Church, and to acquit ourselves as faithful to God, and zealous for the concerns of religion, and every thing that's dear to us as men and Christians.

We here testify and protest against the prompters to, promoters or establishers of, and against every thing that hath tended to the promoting, advancing, corroborating, or by law establishing such a wicked and ruining Union; and hereby we also declare against the validity of the proceedings of the late Parliament with reference to the carrying on, and establishing the said Union; and that their acts shall not be look't upon as obligatory to us, nor ought to be by posterity, nor any way prejudicial to the cause of God, and the covenanted work of reformation in this Church, nor to the beeing, liberty, and freedom of Parliaments, according to the laudable and antient pratique of this kingdom, the which we do not only for ourselves, but also in the name of all such as shall join or concurr with us in this our protestation, and therefore we Protest

In regard, That the said Union is a visible and plain subversion of the fundamental antient constitutions, laws and liberties of this kingdom, which we as a free people have enjoyed for the space of about two thousand years, without ever being fully conquered, and we have had singular and remarkable stepts of Providence preventing our utter sinking, and preserving us from such a deludge and overthrow, which some other nations more mighty and opulent than we, have felt, and whose memory is much extinct: while by this incorporating Union with England in their sinful terms, this nation is debased and enslaved, its antient independency lost and gone, the parliamentary power dissolved which was the very strength, bulwork and basis of all liberties and priviledges of persons of all ranks, of all manner of courts and judicatories, corporations and societies within this kingdom; all which, now, must be at the disposal and discreation of the British Parliament, (to which, by this Union, this nation must be brought to full subjection) and furder the number of peers, who have many times ventured their lives for the interest of their country, having reputation

and success at home and were famous and formidable abroad: and the number of barons and burrows famous sometime, for courage and zeal for the interest of their country (and, more especially in our reforming times) all these, reduced to such an insignificant and small number in the Brittish Parliament, we say, (as is also evident from the many protestations given in to the late Parliament against this Union) how far it is contrary to the honour, interest, foundamental laws, and constitutions of this kingdom, and a palpable surrender of the soveraignity, rights and priviledges of the nation; and how by this surrender of parliament and soveraignity the people are deprived and denuded of all security, as to any thing that's agreed to by this Union, and all that's dear to them, is daily in danger to be encroached upon, altered or subverted by the said Brittish Parliament, managed intirely by the English, who seldom have consulted our well-fare, but rather have sought opportunity to injure us, and are now put in a greater capacity with more ease to act to our prejudice: and poor people to be made lyable to taxes, levies and unsupportable burdens, and many other imminent hazards and impositions, all which we here protest against.

As also that which is little considered (tho' most lamentable), how the foundamental constitutions should be altered, subverted, and overturned, not only, *renitente and reclamante populo*, but also by such men, who, if the righteous and standing laws of the nation were put in execution, are uncapable of having any vote or suffrage in any judicatory; seeing the Covenants National and Solemn League, which had the assent and concurrence of the three estates of Parliament, and the sanction of the civil law, cordially and harmoniously assenting to, complying with, and coroborrating the acts and canons of ecclesiastick courts in favour of these covenants, whereby they became the foundation whence any had right to reign or govern in this land,

and also became the foundation, limitation, and constitution of the government and succession to the crown of this realm, and the qualification of all magistrats supreame, and subordinate, and of all officers in church, state, or army, and likewise the ground and condition of the peoples obedience and subjection, as may be seen in the acts, laws, and practise of these times: witness the admission of Charles II. to the government, *Anno* 1651. From all which it is evident how blind such men have been, who not only have enslaved the nation, but have rendered themselves unfamous by such an open and manifest violation of these solemn and sacred vows to the most High God, to the obligation of which they as well as the rest of the land, are indispensibly bound.

But ah! when we mention these Covenants, how notorious and palpable is the breach of, and indignity done to these solemn vows by this sinful Union, by means whereof they come to be buried in perpetual oblivion, and all means for prosecuting their ends are so blockt up by this incorporating Union with England, as that what ever is or may be done or acted contrair thereunto, or in prejudice thereof by any of the enemies of the same, cannot be remeided in a due and impartial exercise of church discipline, and execution of the laws of the land against such transgressors. And if we would open our eyes and consider a little with reference to our national Covenant, we may clearly see that this incorporating Union is directly contrar to that particular oath and vow made to God by us in this kingdom, which we are obliged to fulfill and perform in a national state and capacity, as we are a particular nation by ourselves, distinct in the constitution of our government and laws from these of England, and from all others: But now when we cease to be a particular nation, we being no way distinct from that of England (which is the very genuine and inevitable effect of this Union) how then can we keep our national vows to

God, when we shall not be a particular nation, but only (by means of this incorporating Union) made a part of another nation, whose government is manag'd, as is very well known, in many things directly contrar to what is contained in this national Covenant of this land; though we have charity to believe, there shall multitudes be found in the land who will grant and acknowledge themselves bound to the observation of that oath by an indispensibility, which no power on earth can disolve.

And what a palpable breach is this wicked Union of our Solemn League and Covenant, which was made and sworn with uplifted hands to the most High God, for purging and reforming His house in these three nations from error, heresie, superstition and profaneness, and whatever is contrar to sound and pure doctrine, worship, discipline, and government in the same: And so it involves this nation in most fearful perjury before God, being contrar to the very first article of the Covenant wherein we swear to contribute our outmost endeavours in our several places and callings to reform England in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government; but by this Union both we and they are bound up for ever from all endeavours and attempts of this nature, and have put ourselves out of a capacity to give any help or assistance that way; But on the contrar they came to be hardened in their deformation, impious and superstitious courses. And how far contrar to the second article, where we solemnly abjure prelacy for ever, when by this Union, prelacy comes for ever to be established and settled on the surest and strongest foundations imaginable, as is evident from the ratification of the articles in the English Parliament. with the exemplification of the same in the Scots Parliament, where the prelatick government in England is made a foundamental article of the Union: so it is also impossible for us to fulfill the other part of that article, where we forswear schism, which a legal tolleration of errors will infer

and fix among us, as the native result and inevitable consequence of this Union ; and how far this is contrar to the Word of God, and to our covenants, any considering person may decern. As to the third article, any may see how far it is impossible for us to preserve the rights, liberties, and priviledges of Parliament and kingdom, when divested both of our Parliaments and liberties in a distinct national way, or yet as according to the same article, where we are obliged to maintain and defend the king, his majesty's person and government in defence and preservation of the true religion ; how can it be supposed, that we can answer our obligation to this part of the Covenant, when a corrupt religion is established, as is by this Union already done, when prelatick government is made a foundamental thereof. And it is a clear breach of the fourth article of the Solemn League and Covenant, where we swear to oppose all malignants and hinderers of reformation and religion, and yet by this Union, the prelats, who themselves are the very malignants and enemies to all further reformation in religion are hereby settled and secured in all their places of power and dignity, without the least appearance or ground of expectation of any alteration for ever.

How offensive and displeasing unto God this accursed Union is, may be further evident by its involving this land in a sinful conjunction and association with prelats, malignants, and many other enemies to God and Godliness, and stated adversaries to our reformation of religion and sworn-to principles in our Covenants National and Solemn League, and particularly as this Union imbodys and units us in this land in the strickest conjunction and association with England, a land so deeply already involved in the breach of Covenant, and pestered with so many sectaries, errors and abominable practices, and joins us in issue and interest with these that are tollerators, maintainers and defenders of these errors, which the Word of God strictly prohibits, and our sacred

Covenants plainly and expressly abjures. And further, how far and deeply it ingages this land in a confedracy and association with God's enemies at home and abroad in their expeditions and counsels; a course so often prohibeted by God in His word, and visibly pleagued in many remarkable instances of providences, as may be seen both in sacred and historical records, and the unlawfulness thereof, on just and scriptural grounds, demonstrate by famous divines, even of our own Church and nation, and set down as a cause of God's wrath against this Church and kingdom. And how detestable must such an Union be, whose native tendency leads to wear off, from the dissenting party in England, all sight, sense, consideration and belief of the indispensibility of the Solemn League, and hardening enemies in their opposition to it, and these of all ranks in the habitual breach of it: yea also, how shamefully it leads to the obliterating and extinguishing all the acts of parliaments and assemblies made in favours of these covenants and reformation, especially between 1638 and 1649 inclusive. And not only so, but to a trampling on all the blood of martyrs during the late tyrannical reigns, and a plain burying of all the testimonies of the suffering and contending party in this land, in their firm, faithful and constant adherance to the covenanted work of reformation, and their declarations, protestations, and wrestlings against all the indignities done unto, and usurpations made upon the royal crown and prerogative of the Mediator, and all the priviledges and instrinsick rights of this Church; we say, not only burying these in perpetual oblivion by this copestone of the land's sins and defections, but also opposing and condemning these as matters of the least concern and trivial, as not being worthy of the contending and suffering for, whereby these who ventured their lives and their all, may be reputed to have dyed as fools, and suffered justly.

We cannot here omit also to declare and testify against

the constitution of the British Parliament, not only upon the consideration of the foresaid grounds and reasons, but also upon the account of the sinful mixture and unlawful admission of bishops and churchmen, to have a share in the legislative power, or in any place in civil courts or affairs, and thereto act or vote forensically in civil matters, a thing expressly forbidden and discharged by Christ the only Head and Lord of His own house, whose Kingdom, as Mediator, is not of this world, but purely spiritual; and so the officers in His house must be spiritual; so that the civil power of Church men is a thing inconsistent and incompatible with that sacred and spiritual function. Upon which consideration, how palpable a sin will it be to subject to, or accept of any oath that may be imposed by the said British Parliament, for the maintenance and support of such an Union, or for recognoscing, owning and acknowledgeing the authority of the said Parliament, and that because of our swearing, and promising subjection to the said Parliament, we do thereby homologate the foresaid sinful constitution, and swear, and promise subjection to the bishops of England who are a considerable part of that Parliament, and so we shall be bound and oblidged to maintain and uphold them in their places, dignities, and offices, which is contrar to the Word of God and our covenants, while the very first article of the Solemn League oblidges us to endeavour the reformation of the religion in the kingdom of England, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the Word of God, as well as in Scotland. And it is very well known that the government of bishops is not according to the Word of God, but contrar to it, and likeways contrar the second article of the Solemn League whereby we are obliged to the extirpation of prelacy, that is, church government by archbishops, bishops, &c., which we will be obliged by such an oath to maintain and defend. And besides, from the consideration of the person that by the patrons and establishers

of this Union, and by the second article of the Union itself, is nominated and designed to succeed after the decease of the present Queen Anne, in the government of these nations, to wit the Prince of Hanover, who hath been bred and brought up in the Luthren religion, which is not only different from, but even in many things contrar unto that purity, in doctrine, reformation, and religion, we in these nations had attained unto, as is very well known. Now, the admitting such a person to reign over us, is not only contrar to our Solemn League and Covenant, but to the very Word of God itself; requiring and commanding one from among their brethren, and not a stranger who is not a brother, to be set over them: whereby undoubtedly is understood. not only such who were of consanguinity with the people of the land, but even such as served and worshipped the God of Israel; and not any other, and that in the true and perfect way of worshipping and serving Him, which He Himself hath appointed, as they then did, to which this intended succession is quite contrary. And besides this, he is to be solemnly engaged and sworn to the prelats of England, to maintain. protect, and defend them in all their dignities, dominion, and revenues, to the preventing and excluding all reformation out of these nations for ever.

And upon the like and other weighty reasons and considerations (as popish education, conversation, etc.) We protest against, and disown the pretended Prince of Wales from having any just right to rule or govern these nations, or to be admitted to the Government thereof: and whereas (as is reported) we are maliciously aspersed by these who profess themselves of the Presbyterian perswasion, especially the Laodicean preachers, that we should be accessory to the advancement of him whom they call the Prince of Wales to the throne of Britain: Therefore to let all concerned be fully assured of the contrary, We protest and testifie against all such so principled to have any right to rule in thir lands,

because we look upon all such to be standing in a stated opposition to God and our covenanted work of reformation. Not that we contemn, deny or reject civil government and governours (as our former declared principles to the world make evident) but are willing to maintain, own, defend and subject to all such governours as shall be admitted according to our Covenants, and laws of the nation, and act in defence of our covenanted work of reformation, and in defence of the nations ancient liberties and priviledges, according to the laudable laws and practique of this kingdom.

And further, We cannot but detest, abominate and abhor, and likeways protest against the vast and unlimitted tolleration of error and sectaries, which, as a necessary and native consequence of this Union, will inevitably follow thereupon, and whereby a plain and patent way is laid open for these errors, which will certainly have a bad influence upon all the parts, pieces, and branches of the reformation, both in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, yea even upon the most momentuous and fundamental articles of the Christian faith: For hereby Anabaptists, Erastians, Socinians, Arminians, Quakers, Theists, Atheists, and Libertines of all kinds, with many others (which abound and swarm in that land) will come crouding and thronging in among us, venting and vomiting up their damnable and hellish tenets and errors to the destruction of souls, and great dishonour of God in many respects, and that without any check or control by civil authority, as is evident from the present practice of England, as having gotten full and free libertie for all this by means of this accursed Union. How then ought not every one to be affrayed, when incorporating themselves with such a people so exposed to the fearful and tremendous judgments of God, because of such gross impieties and immoralities (not that our land is free of such hainous wickednesses as may draw down a judgment, but there these

evils are to a degree) for what unparalelled, universal, national perjury is that land guilty of, both toward God and man (though there were no more) by the breach of the Solemn League and Covenant that they once made with this nation, for the defence and reformation of religion: but also what abominable lasciviousness, licentiousness, luxury, arrogancy, impiety, pride and insolence, together with the vilest of whoredoms, avowed breach of Sabbath, and most dreadful blasphemies, yea, the contempt of all that's sacred and holy; gets liberty to reign and predomine without check or challenge, so that joining with such people, cannot but expose us, as well as them, to the just judgment of God, while continuing in these sins.

And here we cannot pass by the unfaithfulness of the present ministers (not that we judge all of them to be cast in the same ballance) who at the first beginning of this work seemed to be so zealously set against it, and that both in their speeches, sermons and discourses (which was duty). But yet in a very little after flinched from, and became generally so dumb, silent, indifferent or ambiguous to the admiration of many, so that people knew not what to construct.

But from what cause or motive they were so influenced, they know best themselves: Sure their duty both to God and man was, to shew and declare how shameful, hurtful, and highly sinful this course was as so circumstantiat. And if ministers faithfulness and zeal to the concerns of Christ had led them to such freedom and plainness, as was duty in such a matter, and had discovered how contrary this Union was to the fundamental laws and sworn principles, by all probability they might have had such influence as to stop such an unhallowed and unhappy project. But it seems their policy hath utwitted their piety, their pleasing of Man in conniving at, if not complying with their design that was carried on, hath weighed more with them, than the pleasing of God, in their witnessing and testifying against it. (But

to say no more) by the negligence of ministers on the one hand, and the politicks of statesmen on the other hand, this wicked and naughty business has been carryed on and accomplished, to the provocking of God, enslaving the nation, and bringing the same under manifest perjury and breach of Covenant. But how to evite the judgments pronunced against such, we know not, but by returning to their first love, taking up their first ground, and standing to sworn Covenants, solemnly unto God, and adhereing to the cause of God, and the faithful testimonies of this Church, and seeking back unto the old path, abandoning and shaking off and forsaking all these God-provoking and land-ruining courses; we say, We know and are perswaded, there can be no mean to retrive us in this land, but by unfeigned repentance, and returning unto Him from whom we have so deeply revolted. And among the politicks of this Age, it could not but be reckoned the wisdom of the nation, if ever they get themselves recovered out of the snare, to animadvert upon all such, as have had any hand in the contriving or managing it, as being enemies both to God and their country; which course, if it had been taken in former times, with such who were enemies to religion and liberty, it would have deterred such from being so active in this fatal stroak.

Upon these and many more weighty considerations, plain and demonstrable evils in this complex mass of sin and misery, all the true lovers of Zion who desire to be found faithful to God, to their vows and sworn principles, and who seek to be found faithful in their generation and duty of the day: and all such, who desire, love and respect the honour, independency, liberty and priviledge of their native countrey, especially in such a juncture, when long threatned judgments are so imminent, and religion and liberty as it were, in their last breathing, will easily find it to be their bound duty (as they would not conspire with adversaries to religion and

liberty) to show no favour or respect, and give no encouragement or assistance that may tend to the upholding or supporting this Union; but that it is their duty and concernment (as well as ours) to testify and declare against the same, and to concurr with their utmost endeavours to stop and hinder the same, and to deny their accession to, connivance at, or complyance with any thing that may tend to the continuing such an unsupportable yoke upon themselves or their posterity.

And now to draw this, our protestation, to a conclusion, we heartily invite, and in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ intreat all in both nations, who tender the glory of God, the removing the causes of His wrath, indignation and imminent judgments upon us, and who desire the continuance of His tabernacle, gospel ordinances, and gracious presence among us, and seek and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and labour to follow the footsteps of these who throu' faith and patience inherit the promise, the noble cloud of witnesses who have gone before us; we say, we heartily invite and intreat such to consider their ways, and to come and join in a harmonious, zealous, and faithful withstanding all and every thing that may be like a hightning, or copestone of our defections, and particularly to join with us (according to our reformation, Covenants, Confession of Faith, and testimonies of our Church, as agreeable to the sacred and unerring rule of faith and manners, the Holy Scriptures) in this our protestation and testimony. And for these effects, we desire that this our protestation may be a standing testimony to present and succeeding ages, against the sinfulness of this land-ruining, God-provoking, soul destroying and posterity-enslaving and ensnaring Union, and this *ad futurum rei memoriam.* And to evite the brand and odium of passing the bounds of our station, and that this our protestation may be brought to the view of the

world; we have thought fit to publish and leave a copy of the same at Sanquhar by a part of our number, having the unanimous consent of the whole so to do.

Given on the 2nd day of October, 1707.

SECESSION FROM THE REVOLUTION CHURCH.*

We, Mr. John Mackmillan, present minister of the Gospel at Balmaghie, and Mr. John Mackneil, Preacher of the Gospel, being most odiously and invidiously represented to the world as schismaticks, separatists and teachers of unsound and divisive doctrine, tending to the detriment of Church and State, and especially by Ministers with whom we were embodied, while there remained any hope of getting grievances redressed. Therefore, that both Ministers and Professors may know the unaccountableness of such aspersions, let it be considered that this backsliding Church (when we with others might have been big with expectations for advancement in Reformation) continued in their defections from time to time, still, as occasion was given, evidencing their readiness to comply with every new

* The Rev. John Mackmillan, minister of Balmaghie, endeavoured for years to convince the Established Church that the Church had submitted at the Revolution to invasions of her independence by the State, and to persuade her to return to the attainments of the Reformation. Bitter opposition to his efforts led to his secession from the Church, after tabling this "Protestation, Declinature and Appeal." Mr. John Mackneil joined in the Declinature. A tablet in memory of Mr. Mackmillan has been recently erected in Balmaghie Church by his great-great-grandson, Dr. John Grieve, Glasgow. Part of the inscription is, "A Covenanter of the Covenanters: a Father of the Reformed Presbyterian Church: a Faithful Minister of Jesus Christ."

backsliding course, instance that of the Oath of Alledgance, and Bond of Assurance to the present Queen; which additional step to the former gave occasion and rise to our unhappy contentions and divisions. And now at this time, for the glory of God, the vindication of truth and of ourselves (as conscience and reason obligeth us), to make evident to the world the groundlesness of these aspersions and calumnies as renters and dividers, and particularly in the commissions late odious and malicious lybel, wherein are contained many gross falsehoods, such as swearing persons not to pay cess, and travelling throw the country with scandalous persons in arms, which, as they are odious culumnies in themselves, so they will never be proven by witnesses: and, as to our judgment anent the cess, we reckon it duty in the people of God to deny and withhold all support, succour, aid, or assistance that may contribute to the upholding or strengthening the man of sin, or any of the adversaries of truth, (as the Word of God instructs us) or for supporting any in such a way, as tending to the establishing the kingdom of Satan, and bringing down the kingdom of the Son of God, in a course tending this way, how deeply these nations are engadged (contrar to the Word of God and our indispensible oaths and covenants, whereby these lands were solemnly devoted to God) is too palpable and plain, especially in the sinful terms of the late God provoking, religion destroying, and land ruining union: we judge it most necessary to give to the world a brief and short account of our principles in what we own or disown (referring for larger, more ample information, to several protestations and testimonies given by some of the godly heretofore at different times and places) and hereby that truth may be vindicated and our consciences exonered.

We declare to the world our hearty desire to embrace and adhere to the written Word of God, contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the only

and compleat rule and adequat umpire of faith and manners, and whatever is founded thereupon, and agreeable thereunto; such as our Confession of Faith; Larger and Shorter Catechisms; Directory for Worship; Covenants National and Solemn League; the acknowledgment of sin and engagement to duties: causes of God's wrath, and the ordinary and perpetual officers of Christ's appointment, as pastors, doctors, elders and deacons, and the form of Church government, commonly called Presbyterian.

Next, we declare our firm adherence to all the faithful contendings for truth, whether of old or of late, by ministers and professors, and against whatever sinful courses, whether more refined or more gross, and particularly the public resolutions Cromwel's usurpation, the toleration of sectaries, and heresies in his time, and against the sacraligious usurpation and tyranny of Charles II., the unfaithfulness of ministers and professors in complying with him, and accepting his indulgences first and last. And in a word to everything agreeable to the matter of this our testimony, as it is declared in page 25 and 26 of the Informatory Vindication; printed *Anno* 1687.

Likeways, we declare our adherence unto the testimony against the abominable toleration granted by the Duke of York, and given in to the ministers at Edinburgh, by that faithful minister and now glorified martyr, Mr. James Renwick, January 17, 1688. And to whatever wrestlings or contendings have been made, or testimonies given against the endeavours of any in their subtle and sedulous striving to insinuate and engadge us in a sinful confederacy with a malignant interest and cause, contrar to the Word of God, our Solemn League and Covenant, and testimony of this Church.

Next, we bear testimony against persons being invested with royal power and authority in thir covenanted lands, without a declaration of their hearty complyance with, and

approbation of the National and Solemn League and Covenant and engadgment to prosecute the ends thereof, by consenting to and ratifying all acts and laws made in defence of these Covenants, agreeable to the Word of God, and laudable acts and practise of this kirk and kingdom in our best times.

Moreover, we bear testimony against all confederacies and associations with popish prelats and malignants, contrary to the Word of God and our solemn engadgments. The magistrats adjourning and dissolving of assemblies, and not allowing them time to consider and exped their affairs: their appointing them dyets and causes of Fasts, particularly that in January 14: and the Thanksgiving Aug. 26, *Anno* 1708, which is a manifest encroachment upon, and destructive to the priviledges of this Church: their protecting of curats in the peaceable exercise of their ministry, some in kirks, others in meeting houses, yea, even in the principal city of the kingdom, if qualified according to law by swearing the Oath of Alledgance. Their not bringing unto condign punishment enemies to the Covenant and cause of God, but advancing such to places of power and trust: all which we here bear testimony against.

Next, we bear testimony against lukewarmness and unfaithfulness in ministers anent the corruptions and defections the Church was guilty of in the late times, not yet purged and removed by censures, and other ways, as was duty. And their not leaving faithful and joint testimonies against all the encroachments made upon the Church by the civil powers, since the year 1690. And we bear testimony against the settling the constitution of this Church, according as it was established in the year 1592. And the ministers not testifying against this deed, seems to import a disowning all the reformation attained to betwixt 1638 and 1649 inclusive. At least cowardice in not daring to avouch the same, or their being ashamed to own it, because many

famous and faithful acts of assemblies, especially about the year 1648, would have made them lyable to censure, even to the length of silencing and deposition ; for their defection and unfaithfulness during the late times, of the lands apostasie. Particularly, the weakning the hands and discouraging the hearts of the Lord's suffering people, by their bitter expressions, and aspersions cast on them for their zeal and tenderness, which would not allow them to comply with a wicked, arbitrary and bloody council as many of them did. Their not renewing the Covenant buried for upwards of fifty years by the greatest part of the land, contrar to the former practise of this Church, especially after some grosser steps of defection. Their receiving of perjured curats into ministerial communion, without covenant tyes and obligations and evident signs of their repentance, contrary to the former practise of this Church. Their receiving some lax tested men, and curates, elders, into kirk offices, without some apparent signs at least of their repentance in a publick appearance, contrar to the former practise of this Church in such like cases, evident by the Acts of the Assemblies. Their not protesting formally, faithfully and explicitly against the magistrats adjourning and dissolving of Assemblies, and recording the same, contrar to the practise of this Church in our reforming times. We are not concerned to notice the protestation of some few persons at particular times, seeing their precipitancy and rashness in this matter, (as they accounted it) was afterward apologized for ; and that it was not the deed of the Assembly. Their not asserting in any explicit and formal act the divine right of Presbytry, and the instrinsick power of the Church, though often desired by many privat Christians, and some several members, their not confirming and ratifying the Acts of the Assemblies that were made in our best times for strengthening and advancing the work of reformation, contrar to the former practise of this Church. Their

admitting in many places, ignorant and scandalous persons to the Lord's table, contrar to the Acts of former Assemblies: Their not protesting against the present sinful confederacy with papists, malignants, and other enemies of religion and godliness; contrar to the Word of God, and former practise of this Church: their offensive partiality in their respective judicatories as to some particular members, where, the more lax and scandalous are overlooked and past by, and the more faithful and zealous are severely dealt with and handled, contrar to the rule of equity and the former practise of this Church: Their refusing and shifting to receive and redress the people's just and great grievances, and little regard had to prevent the giving offence to the Lord's people, and small endeavours to have these things removed that are stumbling and offensive to them, contrar to the Apostle's rule and practise, who became all things to all Men that by all means he might save some: their not declaring faithfully and freely against the sins of the land former and latter, without respect of persons, contrar to that express precept, "Set the trumpet to thy mouth, and show My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sin."

Lastly, we bear testimony against Ministers sinful and shameful silence, when called to speak and act by preaching and protesting against this unhallowed Union, which, as it is already the stain, so we swear it will prove the ruin and bain of this poor nation; though some of them, we grant, signified their dislike thereof, before and about the time it was concluded, yet there was no plain and express protestation, faithfully and freely given in to the Parliament, shewing the sinfulness and danger of this cursed Union, being contrar, not only to the honour, interest, and fundamental laws, and constitutions of the kingdom, and a palpable surrender of the sovereignity, rights and priviledges of the nation, but also a manifest breach of our Solemn League and Covenant,

which was made and sworn with uplifted hands to the most high God, for purging and reforming the three nations from error, heresy, superstition and prophaneness, and whatever is contrar to sound doctrine, the power of godliness, and the purity of worship, discipline and government in the same. And so it involves this nation into a most fearful perjury before God, being contrar to the first article of the Covenant, wherein we swear to contribute with our outmost endeavours, in our several places and callings, to reform England in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government; But by this Union we are bound up for ever from all endeavours and attempts of this nature, and have put ourselves out of all capacity to give any help or assistance that way, as ye may see more fully in the late protestation against the Union, published at Sanquhar, October 22, 1707.

Let none say, That what we have done here flows from ambition to exalt ourselves above others, for as we have great cause, so we desire grace from the Lord, to be sensible of what accession we have with others in the land, to the provoking of His Spirit, in not walking as becomes the Gospel, according to our Solemn Engagements, neither proceeds it from irritation or inclination (by choice or pleasure) to discover our mother's nakedness or wickedeness, or that we love to be of a contentious spirit, for our witness is in heaven (whatever the world may say) that it would be the joy of our hearts, and as it were a resurrection from the dead, to have these grievances redressed and removed. and our backsliding and breaches quickly and happily healed, but it is to exoner consciences by protesting against the defections of the land, especially of Ministers: and seeing we can neither with safety to our persons, nor freedom in our consciences, compear before the Judicatories, while these defections are not acknowledged and removed, so we must, so long decline them, and hereby do decline them, as unfaithful judges in such matters: in regard they have, in so

great a measure, yielded up the priviledges of the Church into the hands and will of her enemies, and carried on a course of defection contrar to the Scriptures, our Covenants, and the acts and constitutions of this our Church. And hereby we further protest and testify against whatever they may conclude, or determine, in their ecclesiastick courts by acts, ratifications, sentences, censures, &c., that have been, or shall be made or given out by them, and protest that the same may be made void and null, and not interpreted as binding to us or any who desire firmly to adhere to the Covenanted work of Reformation.

But let none look upon what we have here said, to be a vilipending or rejecting of the free, lawful, and rightly constitute courts of Christ, for we do acknowledge such to have been among the first most effectual means appointed of God for preserving the purity and advanceing the power of reformation in the Church of Christ; the sweet fruits and blessed effects whereof, this Church hath sometimes enjoyed, and which we have been endeavouring and seeking after, and are this day longing for.

We detest and abhorr that principle of casting off the ministry, wherewith we are odiously and maliciously reproached by these who labour to fasten upon us the hateful names of schismaticks, separatists, despisers of the Gospel: but, herein as they do bewray their enmity to the cause we own, so till they bring in their own principles and practices, and ours also, and try them by the law and testimony, the measuring line of the sanctuary, the Word of God, and the practice of this Church, when the Lord keeped house with, and rejoiced over her as a bridegroom over his bride, they can never prove us schismaticks or separatists from the kirk of Scotland upon the account of our non-union with the backslidden multitude, ministers and others.

Finally, that we may not be judged by any, as persons of

an infallible spirit, and our actions above the cognisance of the judicatories of Christ's appointment: we appeal to the first free, faithful and rightly constitute Assembly in this Church, to whose decision and sentence in the things lybelled against us we willingly refer ourselves, and crave liberty to extend and enlarge this our Protestation, Declinature, and Appeal as need requires.

Jo. Mackmillan.
Jo. Mackneil.

Balmaghie Manse, *Sept. 24th, 1708.*

"The Chiefest among ten thousand."

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